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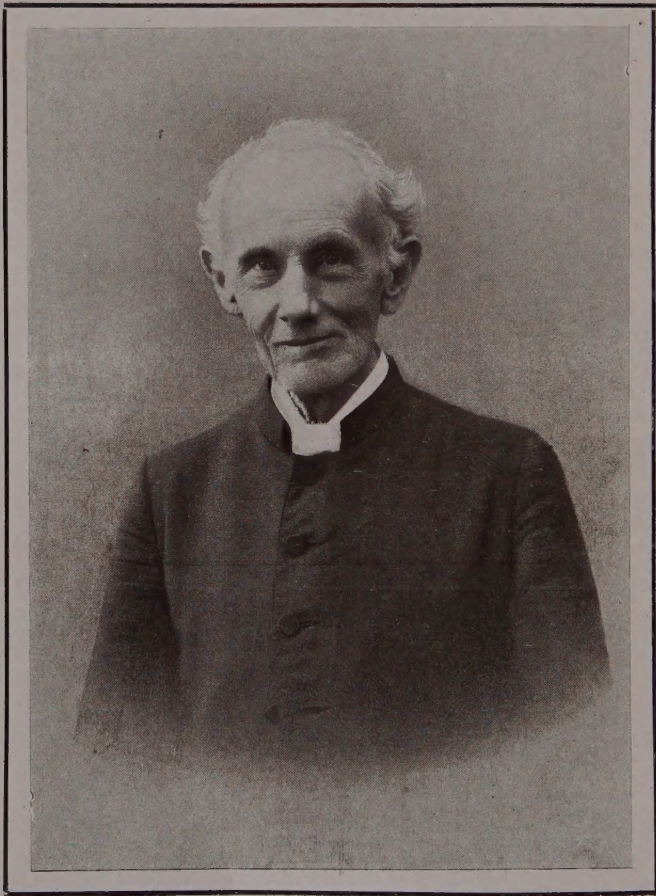
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ARNOLD FOSTER

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INTRODUCTION

A FEW words of explanation must be offered to the readers of this book. The first intention was to publish a longer book, which should contain more of Arnold Foster's articles and hitherto unpublished MSS. ; but the conditions of the printing world made the first plan impracticable, and called for a shorter work : the author of the Memoir trusted me with the responsible task of making the needful selection. In doing this, I have not attempted to edit the words of this strong and fearless servant of God. He is left to speak for himself in his own direct and uncompromising way. His ministry for Christ in China is one which the L.M.S. remembers with gratitude and pride ; but it will not be supposed that his views upon Mission policy and theological truth represent at all points the policy of the Society. The reader will not look for that in this book ; he will seek and he will find in it something which goes deeper,—the intimate records of a life hidden with Christ in God, and surrendered to the service of His Lord in China, the dear land of his adoption.

EDWARD SHILLITO.

ARNOLD FOSTER

RECOLLECTIONS

BY H. ARNOLD THOMAS

I HAD known something of Arnold Foster's family before I went to Cambridge, but it was not till I entered Trinity College, in the October term of 1867, that I came into any personal relations with him. He was at St. John's, and was, I think, in his second year, and I remember very well my first meeting with him in his rooms in Malcolm Street, when I returned a call which he had made upon me. My impression is that he was smoking a cigar, and that he offered me sherry. Such things were done in those far-off days. But I very soon found that among all my friends there was no one who had a more austere standard of life, or who was less addicted to any forms of self-indulgence.

Once, at a meeting of undergraduates, someone said—I forget how the subject came up—"There is no man in Cambridge who makes me feel so much ashamed of myself as that man Foster." I think many of us had the same feeling. There was not an atom of cant about him; but he seemed to be living in an atmosphere in which the ordinary undergraduate did not always find it quite easy to breathe. And yet, when you came to know him, he was the most companionable and lovable of men. I happened—to my great advantage—to be thrown a good deal with him. He persuaded me to help him in a night school in which he was interested at Barnwell. Then

I was put up week after week to teach circulating decimals and other subjects, of which I had no profound knowledge, to boys, whose interest, I fear, lay largely in other directions. I am afraid I was not much good, but you had to stick to your job when Foster was in command, and it was some compensation when one's sense of futility was a little painful, to have those walks on winter nights, to and fro between Cambridge and Barnwell, and the opportunities of intimate conversation which they provided. Foster could blaze out in hot indignation at times. He was talking to me once of some American in China, who was dealing in a blustering fashion, and not very fairly, with a Chinese servant. That was the kind of thing that Foster could not put up with; and he remonstrated. "What business is it of yours?" said the bully. "I'll let you know what business it is of mine," was the prompt reply, and I have no doubt the desired information was afforded with some warmth and vigour. He always felt that it was his business to see that the weak were not trampled upon. And yet he was "a veray parfit, gentil knight." A friend of mine, who lived in his house for three or four years, tells me of his invariable courtesy and anxiety to make his guests feel at ease, and to save them as much trouble as possible. Showing little mercy to himself, he had the most chivalrous consideration for the feelings and needs of other people, and this, in those trifling things which count for so much. He ate next to nothing himself, and was always eager to get back to his books; but he would beg you not to hurry, and pretend that it was such a wise thing to sit still after a meal—as if his frugal fare could be called a meal—and digest one's food. That is wholly in accord with my recollection of him. Once he was my guest in Clifton, and we asked him, when he went to bed, what time he would like to be called in the morning. He said he did not wish to be called, and we dimly surmised

that that was because he intended to be up and about before anyone else was stirring. But he would like to take a bath if it would be quite convenient. Accordingly, something after five o'clock he stole like a thief to the bathroom, moving with the utmost care, so as not to disturb any sleeper. Unfortunately, however, in spite of his excessive caution, he slipped at a critical moment and, though happily unhurt, made a splash loud enough to rouse the whole house. That was a great trouble to him, but we told him he was properly punished for thinking so little of himself and so much of other people.

He was not ambitious of academic distinction, and was content to take the ordinary degree at Cambridge; but he was a conscientious student, and won one of the Carus University prizes for Greek Testament. The great Cambridge scholars and theologians, especially, I think, Dr. Westcott, had a very warm place in his admiration and regard, and to the end of his life he was in the habit of commending them to all young students. And he had a great love for Frederick Maurice, who was at that time lecturing at Cambridge. So far as I remember, he played no games, had no hobbies, and indulged in no form of athletic exercise except walking. But he attended pretty regularly the debates at the Union, not, I imagine, for the fun of it, but with a view to the cultivation of the art of speaking. He was elected on the Committee and became in due course President. But I do not recollect ever hearing him speak. That was my own fault for not being more often at the Debates. He was President, I think, on almost the only occasion when I was goaded into speech. That was on the subject of Compulsory Chapels, and I had a feeling that Foster did not quite approve the line that I took. W. K. Clifford was present and warmly supported me; but Clifford and Foster had little in common.

After taking his degree he went for a time to be tutor

to young G. W. E. Russell, in whose father's house in Bedfordshire he lived. I could see when he talked to me about it, that he enjoyed that period. It was the kind of atmosphere he loved. He was kindly treated, and liked reading the lessons in Church. It was a pleasant and peaceful time. Mr. Russell told me, in a letter a few years ago, that he still kept up his friendship with his old tutor. In truth, few people, who had ever known Foster at all intimately, were willing to lose his friendship.

He married a lady, who was a member of my church, and of whom we had spoken to him on that occasion when he was our guest. She was then about to go, or had just gone, as one of the first women missionaries to China, and we felt sure he would be interested. I do not remember what he said on the subject, but I have heard since that he strongly objected to the policy of sending out unmarried women missionaries, and declared that he would never sanction it. His fellow missionaries appear to have remarked that he felt so strongly on the subject that he resolved that he would at least do his best to reduce the number of these missionaries by one. But this is, no doubt, one of those wicked things that one's fellow missionaries will sometimes say. Everyone knows that Miss Jackson became a devoted wife and a whole-hearted fellow labourer ; and we are glad to think that, once in his life at least, her husband did something for his own personal happiness and comfort.

How vividly one sees him, and hears him now : the quick outburst of anger against evil, the radiant smile, the honest laughter, the cataract of speech, when the time was short, and there was much in his heart to say ; the reverence in tone and manner when speaking of religious things ; the absurdly grateful recognition of any small attention. I went to see him once when he was in a nursing home in London, and he thanked me for coming, as if I had done him some great service. He was always like that. As I knew him best he

was like an April day, with sudden cloud and tempest, alternating with sunshine, warm and sweet ; but, I daresay, that in later years there was more settled, summer weather. I am not sure of that, though I shall not be surprised to hear that to the end of his life the volcanic fire was apt to burn at times. All I can say is that, to my mind, he belonged to the Goodly Fellowship of the Prophets, and to the Glorious Company of the Apostles ; and I do not doubt that, if occasion had arisen, he would have joined also the Noble Army of Martyrs.

PREFACE TO MEMOIR

MR. FOSTER left, in writing, a request that no one should write his biography, but during his last illness he gave me leave to compile a short memoir, as an introduction to extracts from his writings, which he thought it might be well to publish. He always had a great objection to complimentary language, and was miserable when doing deputation work for the L.M.S., if the Chairman talked about him in words of praise. So I refrain from publishing any of the beautiful letters and resolutions which have been sent to me, bearing witness to the impression his life left on so many who knew him.

A few of the extracts in this book are from his letters, but most are from diaries and notebooks, in which, for many years, he had jotted down thoughts that came to him during the long hours he spent in Bible study.

Extracts have also been taken from manuscripts of sermons and lectures ; the unfinished state of many paragraphs is accounted for by the fact that he rarely wrote them out in full, his notes getting more and more scanty towards the close. Sometimes they became so disconnected that paragraphs had to be omitted altogether.

To these extracts have been added papers published from time to time on different subjects. Those who knew him will seem to hear his voice in many pages ; and my prayer in putting out this little volume is that all who read it may seek to follow him as he followed Christ.

AMY FOSTER.

MEMOIR OF ARNOLD FOSTER

EDITED BY HIS WIFE

CHAPTER ONE

1846-1887

ARNOLD FOSTER was the son of godly parents, his mother (*née* Maria Watson), traced back her ancestry to several generations of puritans, of whom her son was more proud than he would have been of highly titled ancestors. His parents were married in 1835, and in 1840 moved to Stoke Newington, where Arnold, their fifth child, was born on January 21st, 1846. He was baptized on March 26th, by Mr. Binney, and kept the day of his baptism all through his life as a sacred anniversary.

From his earliest years he was religiously inclined, and found much helpful sympathy in his sister Ellen and in a girl cousin, who gave him a small testament when he was seven years old, which he kept to the end of his life. He must have been a very innocent child; he was once sent by some small schoolfellows into a chemist's shop, to ask for some pigeons' milk. In later years he used to tell, with much amusement, how the chemist requested him to go into the yard and milk the pigeons himself.

He was absolutely truthful and was never known to tell a lie, but he had a fair amount of mischief in him as a boy. He was very timid, and could not bear to be alone in the dark. Thunderstorms were a

terror to him ; indeed, he never got over nervous fears, which fact should be remembered when we think of his electing to remain, nearly the only foreigner, in Wuchang during the Boxer troubles, or again, during the Revolution, when a bombardment of the city was daily expected ; also when we think of him, during the last years of his life, on stormy days crossing the Yangtse from Wuchang to Hankow to preach in Union Church.

After some happy days at a school at Leatherhead, he was sent, at the age of thirteen, to Mill Hill, then and now the most famous of nonconformist schools in England. He and some other like-minded lads held a weekly prayer meeting, and he formed friendships, some of which lasted for life. He much valued prizes received at Mill Hill ; an illustrated volume of hymns, called "Sabbath Bells," and Hare's "Victory of Faith" were his favourites. He often deplored that prizes given to boys nowadays are so frequently story-books which will be of no value in later years. It was while at Mill Hill that he bought every Saturday one of Spurgeon's sermons to read with his special friends on the Sunday.

When he was only eleven his mother wrote a touching letter to him, which he kept all through his life. In it she urged him to look less at his sins and more to his Saviour. Evidently he had written to her in a fit of depression about his sinfulness. When sixteen, he cut short a delightful holiday in the Highlands, giving as his first reason, "Because I do not wish to leave my class a Sunday more than I can help." He taught in the Sunday School attached to the Old Gravel Pits Chapel, where the family attended till they removed to Blackheath, in 1863.

On looking back over his school days, he said he was not so happy at Mill Hill as at a private school to which he went later, at Christchurch in Hampshire. It was kept by Mr. Fletcher, a Congregational minister. The boys were allowed a great deal of liberty ;

Arnold found congenial employment in visiting the poor, reading the Bible to a blind man, and taking a class in the Sunday School. In after years, on each visit to England, he went to Christchurch, to call on the widow of his schoolmaster, while she lived, and later to see the familiar place and to look up the housekeeper and other humble friends of his boyhood.

He left school before he was seventeen, and entered the warehouse of his father, in Bread Street, London. He often said, in later life, it was desirable for missionaries to have had some business training before coming to the foreign field. The family had just moved to Lee Park, Blackheath, and though Congregationalists, they attended the ministry of Mr. Martin at the Baptist Church, Lee. Arnold had joined the Church at Hackney, at the age of thirteen, and was now transferred with his family to membership at Lee Chapel ; hence it came about that, while all his life strongly a believer in infant baptism, he is put down in the L.M.S. Register as a member of a Baptist Church. At this time he frequently walked to Greenwich to hear Dr. Adolf Saphir, who inspired him with a lasting love for the Old Testament.

For three or four years, after leaving school, Arnold patiently worked on in his father's business ; though he had set his heart on entering the ministry. When he had saved enough to pay a fair amount of his college expenses, he told his father of his great desire, and though it must have been a deep disappointment to lose his son's help and companionship, Mr. Foster at once gave his consent, and Arnold went to Cambridge in 1866 and entered St. John's College, where he spent, perhaps, the five happiest years of his life. He often said he could never be thankful enough for his time at Cambridge, which then numbered more great students among its theological professors than at almost any other period. Lightfoot, Westcott and F. D. Maurice were lecturing, and Arnold's coach was Gwatkin, since made famous by his " Early

Church History." They kept up a correspondence after Arnold came to China, and on his last furlough Mrs. Gwatkin stated that her husband had kept a photograph of his beloved pupil all those years in his dressing-room.

Having left school early, there was much leeway to make up and no thought of trying for Honours, but he obtained the Carus undergraduates' prize for Greek Testament, and after taking his degree, in 1869, he stayed on to go in for the Theological tripos. It was a lifelong disappointment that he did not obtain a first-class, as his coach fully expected he would do ; but he was so much interested in the first question that he spent far too much time over it, and so lost his chance. The examiners for the Carus prize for Greek Testament for graduates record that he acquitted himself with great credit, though this time he did not obtain the prize, but he got what was far better, a life-long interest in the study of the Greek Testament ; for it he had an enthusiastic love, with which he tried to inspire many younger men and women.

He was never great at athletics, but was a good walker, and some of the happiest recollections of his youth are of summer holidays, one a walking tour through the Lake district, one driving tandem through the Trossachs, another time with his family in Derbyshire. All these places were remembered with great thankfulness, his joy in memories being very marked throughout his life. During two long vacations he acted as tutor to George W. E. Russell, with whom he kept up a correspondence through the latter's lifetime, all the more interesting because George Russell became a very High Churchman. He sent several of his books to Mr. Foster, inscribed "With the Author's love." While tutoring at Woburn Mr. Foster much enjoyed walks and talks with the clergyman of the parish, Mr. Cumberlege, a strong evangelical ; in those days his friendships were chiefly with men older than himself, and his

talks were of a serious nature. His experience in trying to earn as much as possible of his college expenses made him feel, in China, that it was a mistake for missionaries to make the road to learning too easy for Chinese youths. He thought they should be taught to desire an honourable independence, and not to rely wholly on foreign help.

Soon after going to Cambridge he joined the Union. He made his first speech there in March, 1867, was made Secretary in 1869, Vice-president in February, and President in May, 1870. This was an unusual honour in those days for a nonconformist.

On July 21st, 1871, he wrote in his diary, " Said Good-bye to dear old Cambridge—saw Mr. Maurice for the last time." He then offered to the London Missionary Society, and was appointed to Hankow.

He was ordained on September 7th, a day sacredly observed through the rest of his life, and on October 12th he left for China, arriving in December. He was troubled in spirit at the size of the Mission houses he had seen on the way, and the style of living generally seemed to him unnecessarily expensive. It was not long before he left the comfortable Mission house in Hankow, for a small native house in Hanyang, where he lived for several years in two very small rooms, keeping most of his belongings under the bed, and trying to subsist on \$1 a week. He was the only Englishman in the city, till a Wesleyan lay-worker came to another part of Hanyang to live.

Hankow, Hanyang and Wuchang are three great cities, nearly six hundred miles from the sea, at the junction of the Han and the Yangtse: which is about a mile broad in this part of its course. Hankow is on the north bank of the river, Hanyang to the west, separated from Hankow by the Han, which, though comparatively narrow at its mouth, is a great waterway up which boats can travel a thousand miles. Wuchang is on the south bank of the Yangtse: there are now steam-launches plying from it to Hankow

and Hanyang, but when Mr. Foster arrived there were only native boats. The cities were still recovering from the effects of the Tai-p'ing rebellion, during which they had been practically destroyed, but the population of the three cities was estimated at a million. This was probably too high an estimate. The Report of the L.M.S. deputation for 1904 says: "Hankow forms a fine strategic centre for missionary operations. When the railways, now being made and others projected, are completed, probably no city in China will in this respect equal it. Hankow stands in the very heart of the Empire, from its central position it is in closest touch with the two provinces, Hupeh and Hunan, whose populations give an aggregate of fifty millions, while other provinces, north, south, east and west, are easily accessible."

The British Concession is at the Eastern end of Hankow, lower down the river. The religious conditions of the foreign community there was much on Mr. Foster's heart, and an arrangement was arrived at in February, 1874, by which he went to Hankow every Sunday to preach at St. John's, where then they had no regular chaplain. In those days no objection was raised to the fact that he had not been ordained by a bishop; and he had no difficulty about the use of the prayer-book, except when it came to the reading the Burial Service over men of immoral life. In later years, he always read from the American prayer-book, when called upon to conduct funerals, as it omits the words about the sure and certain hope, which he could not conscientiously read over some men, and, therefore, thought it best to omit over all. He was in sole charge at St. John's, till September, 1877. He had several kind friends in the foreign community, with one or another of whom he usually lunched on Sunday.

Griffith John was on furlough when Mr. Foster arrived in Hankow. Mr. Bryant and Mr. Bryson were the only L.M.S. missionaries in Central China. Mrs.

Bryant was an invalid, with young children, and there was no other lady in the Mission. The Bryants left in 1875, and Mrs. John had died on her way out in 1873. The question was raised at one time of having unmarried lady workers. It is reported that Mr. Foster said he should resign if any came; he felt so strongly the difficulty in a land like China, as it then was, of unmarried men and women working together. Mr. John married again, an earnest American lady, and Mr. Bryson married on his first furlough, both wives became good workers, and more women were brought into the Church. Mr. John's return to Hankow was a great joy to Mr. Foster, who found in him a true friend and an enthusiastic missionary. But before this he had formed an even greater friendship with David Hill, a devoted Wesleyan missionary. These two were in perfect sympathy in most matters of highest importance, and had true fellowship in the spiritual realm. They had many long walks and talks together, and these were the greatest comfort and joy to Mr. Foster in the early days of his missionary life.

Besides taking the services in the English Church, he worked among the foreign sailors, who, in those days, were numerous during the tea-season in Hankow. He held services on the tea-ships, and got men to attend other services on shore. But he always felt that his chief work should be among the Chinese. He did not find the language easy, and had high ideals of what should be attained to by missionaries. Before he could preach in Chinese he sold books, printing a life of Christ in words of Scripture, which he thought would be more easily understood by the heathen than a Gospel. He sold many of these, and tracts by Dr. John, among the boat-people and hearers at the chapels.

He preached for the first time in Chinese while staying with David Hill at Kwang-chi, a country station, where he felt more at his ease than in the

cities where he was better known. After that he preached on daily, for the greater part of his missionary life. It troubled him in his later years that so few missionaries gave much time to daily preaching to the heathen. He maintained that if this work is left to the Chinese preachers, many of them will think that we do not attach so much importance to it as they would do if we took our full share in it. For many years the chapel at the Kia Kiai, in the centre of Hankow, was open for five hours a day, and a constant stream of listeners from half the provinces of China poured in to listen, for a longer or shorter time, to the continuous preaching, in which Chinese and foreigners took turns in addressing the audience. But the congregations in Hanyang were smaller and the work not so encouraging. Mr. Foster was not a strong man then and was very lonely, and certain revival services, in Hankow, with which he was not in full sympathy, made him feel his isolation keenly. He had fits of great depression, and in 1877 he left Hanyang and went to Shanghai.

While there he heard much of the awful famine in North China. He threw his whole soul into the work of relief. He went through the devastated regions on foot or by Peking cart, and saw the terrible need of the starving people. He left his friends, David Hill, Timothy Richard and others, to superintend the work of distribution, while he went to England to raise funds. He travelled third class, French Mail, not only from principle, but from necessity. He had always returned to the Society all his salary except the bare pittance on which he lived, believing it right for the Society to give fair salaries, but that missionaries should return all that they did not absolutely need: of course, he realized that the case was different, where parents had to provide for the education of their children, but the principle was what he wished to see acknowledged. He reached England on January 4th, 1878, and his family told him that

he looked a good advertisement for the famine fund ; he was painfully thin, and his wardrobe sadly needed replenishing. Appeals for sufferers from famine and flood were not so common in those days as they have become since, and during the next few months he helped to collect the sum of £50,000 from generous people in England, Scotland and Ireland.

After a few months given to work for the famine relief fund, Mr. Foster went to be assistant minister to Mr. David Russell at Eglinton Street Congregational Church, Glasgow. He not only preached frequently, but also visited much among the poor in the neighbourhood. He opened a night-school for the lads, and to this he gave much time and thought. He was in Glasgow from April to December, 1879, and became warmly attached to both Mr. and Mrs. Russell, with whom he corresponded regularly till their deaths some years later. Glasgow always had a very warm place in his heart. He visited old friends there on each of his subsequent furloughs. When he got a letter in 1905, telling of Mrs. Russell's death, he wrote in his diary, " Heard to-day that my dear old friend, Mrs. Russell, entered into rest, 18th February. Thus the last close link with Eglinton Street, and the blessed associations connected therewith, have been lifted up to the higher world and the resurrection hope, and sealed more perfectly with the seal in Christ."

Many friends tried to dissuade him from returning to China, but he had heard the call and was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. As soon as his health permitted, he decided to go back to the Mission field. He did not, however, this time go out in connexion with the L.M.S. Friends in Hankow were anxious to secure his services as Chaplain at St. John's, and guaranteed the small salary of fifty dollars a month, which was all he wanted or would have taken at that time. Before leaving England he went to Bristol, and stayed with his old Cambridge friend,

Mr. Arnold Thomas. He heard from him and his wife of a member of his Church, Amy Jackson, who had gone to Hongkong, rather more than a year before this in the L.M.S. From what they said he wished to meet her, and on arriving at Hongkong did so. This was the beginning of a friendship which led to their marriage on June 21st, 1882. As he could not be long away from Hankow, he got a special licence, so that the marriage could take place at once in Union Church, he being too convinced a nonconformist to be married in the Cathedral, as he could have been without a licence or any delay.

Just before this Mr. Foster had given up his chaplaincy, as fifty dollars a month, out of which rent had to be paid, was hardly enough for a married man to live on, so he opened a little school for English children for two hours each morning, and taught English to Russian and Chinese pupils. He still gave most of his time to Mission work, preaching every day in the London Mission chapels and superintending two boys' day schools.

The poverty of so many of the Chinese oppressed him. He felt that in a land where there was no provision made for regular relief, it was right to give to beggars; not, of course, to able-bodied men, but to the blind and aged. He always took money with him when going up the Chinese streets, to give to deserving cases, and when he missed a regular beggar, a blind old woman, from her usual position, he would take some trouble to find out about her, sometimes going quite out of his way to bestow alms where he knew they were needed.

When a fire broke out he rushed to the spot to help extinguish it, and to keep thieves from stealing the belongings of the poor people whose houses were burning. In those days there were no foreign fire-brigades; the Chinese dragged along their hand machines, but often the only way to stop a fire from spreading was to pull down adjacent houses. Mr.

Foster frequently got this done : on one occasion he broke a rib over it, and was often in great danger. The day after a fire he would go to the place where the burnt-out families had put up mat sheds, and distribute tickets which entitled the possessor to a few hundred cash (sixpence or a shilling), these tickets to be brought to a certain place to be cashed ; if possible he would have some money in a boat and not let people crowd him during the distribution. He adopted the same plan during floods, going from house to house to distribute tickets to the people who had been obliged, by the rising water, to leave their homes. Sometimes they had put up hovels on the city wall. He would inspect their kitchen utensils when they said there was more than one family in a hut, as he knew each family would have their own. He was not often taken in, but he preferred risking giving to those who didn't need, rather than not giving to those who did. He sometimes collected funds from the foreigners in Hankow for these distributions, and sometimes disbursed funds sent to him from home. He was keenly interested in medical missions, and nothing distressed him more in late years than a policy of underrating this most Christlike of all our Mission work.

If he saw a fight going on he always tried to stop it. He succeeded wonderfully in doing this. If the combatants were boys, after separating them, he would drive one of them before him, up the street to some distance, giving the other time to get away. He seemed to know which was the aggressor. On more than one occasion, when a fierce mob gathered outside the hospital, he went at great risk to himself to quiet them. Trouble anywhere seemed to him a call to do what he could to improve matters. His words of comfort in bereavement will be remembered by very many, and not his words only, but his efforts to smooth the path of widows and orphans. He felt a call to do all that in him lay to deliver China

from the opium curse, gambling and other sins. When on furlough he spoke often at anti-opium meetings, and when in Hankow he succeeded in getting the Tao-tai to put out a proclamation forbidding the sale of Manila lottery tickets. This was a great joy to him, his only regret being that he could not induce all the foreign Concessions to make the same rule. He felt strongly the evil effects of missionaries taking up law-suits, and would render no help, even in cases represented to be those of persecution. Anything like claiming damages for losses suffered through anti-Christian riots he objected to, not only refusing to make claims himself, but urging others to take the same course.

In 1884, Mr. Wardlaw Thompson, the Foreign Secretary of the L.M.S., visited Hankow, and on his return to England the Board invited Mr. Foster to become an honorary member of the Society. This he did, taking his full share of the work of the Mission. For some years he had been local secretary and treasurer; this work he continued, feeling thankful for the business training received in his father's office, and much as he disliked committees, he attended them all, till his resignation in 1911.

In 1885 his dearly loved younger brother Henry died, and in 1886 he heard of the death of his father. This was a great sorrow, for he had a very loving heart and was deeply attached to them. He began to plan for going home to see his mother, and in the following February left China with his wife and Miss Green, a lady who had been living with them for two and a half years. She came out to open the first station of the Friends' Foreign Mission in China, but on arrival in Hankow the Consul would not, just then, give passports to Sze-chuen, where she had hoped to begin work, and after staying some time with Mr. and Mrs. Foster, she wished to be baptized and take the Communion. They had not tried to influence her, but she felt keenly her position when she

left St. John's before the Communion service with the majority of the congregation, while the missionaries and more earnest people remained behind to join in partaking of the Lord's Supper. She also felt leaving the Chinese service with the heathen when the Christians remained behind. She began to wonder whether the Friends were right and all the other Christians wrong in regard to the Sacraments, and finally she asked to be baptized.

At this time the missionaries took the services at St. John's in turn, as there was no regular chaplain. It was the only Sunday morning English service in Hankow then. One day, when Mr. Foster was preaching, he saw the British Consul, who sat in the front pew, take out a newspaper and deliberately open and read it. Mr. Foster stopped his preaching and looked at him, but as this had no effect, he wrote to him on the subject the next day, saying besides the deliberate insult to himself, it was not a reverent action in the House of God. He always remembered the answer of the Consul, who replied : " I regret that at the time you were not in my thoughts." Mr. Foster never hesitated because of a man's position in Society to rebuke him, but it cost him much to be a faithful pastor, and he blamed himself frequently for not doing more of this work.

When the Friends' Foreign Mission parted with Miss Green she decided to stay in Hankow, opening a little dispensary, as she had some knowledge of medicine, and doing much good in a quiet, saintly way. Her health was so poor that the doctor strongly advised her going home with Mr. and Mrs. Foster. They had undertaken to look after Mr. and Mrs. Burnett, of the National Bible Society of Scotland. Mr. Burnett was far gone in consumption, and was very anxious to get home with his wife and two small children. He and one of the children died on the voyage, and then Mr. Foster found someone else to befriend.

He was always on the look-out for those who needed his help. This time it was a young widow whose husband, an American missionary, had died in India. She was taking two little children home, joining the steamer at Colombo. By the time she reached Suez she was so ill the doctor insisted on her leaving the steamer and going overland. Mr. and Mrs. Foster took one of the children into their cabin and Miss Green took the other, not knowing whether their mother would be alive when they reached London. It was a great relief to all to find she was there before them, much better, and able to take care of the children again.

CHAPTER TWO

1887-1897

MR. FOSTER spent most of his nine months at home in deputation work, speaking in many of the largest towns in England and Scotland. He refused to go by train or carriage on the Lord's Day, so his host often had to take an unusually long walk to conduct him to the place where the service was to be held. On Sunday mornings he always preached a missionary sermon, desiring above all, that his hearers should be inspired with true enthusiasm and see all things from the standpoint of Heaven, and not of earth. During this furlough he wrote a book, "Christian Progress in China: gleanings from the writings and speeches of many workers." It was published by the R.T.S.

While in China, he had been saddened by the uncared for state of most Russian girls. There was only one small Protestant school which would take them in, and he felt called upon to do something for this class of children. Whenever he saw anyone in need of help, his next thought always was: What can I do? So he decided to open a Home for Eurasian girls. It never became a regular institution, as he intended, for soon after this, such a school was started in Shanghai. But on his return to Hankow he and Mrs. Foster took several girls into their own home and loved and taught them, almost as if they were their own children. The first year there were six, later two more came, and after the eldest had left two more were taken. They were taught with the

English children, who still came to school every morning, and on leaving most of them became governesses. On the arrival of the first three he wrote in his diary, "May the blessing of God Almighty ever be upon each of them and on every succeeding child who comes to us, and may we ever have wisdom and love to bring up these dear children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Later on one developed hip disease, and he carried her up and down stairs for some time till she was better. On their birthdays little parties were arranged; if in the summer in the garden, while the Christmas Tree was an event to which they and their little friends looked forward with much interest. On all these occasions Mr. Foster was the most popular person present. After the girls grew up he still kept in touch with them as much as possible, and took any amount of trouble over their monetary affairs.

He gave up his Russian pupils on the death of his father, as he had no need to spend time in earning much money. He still lived simply, but after his marriage he gave up Chinese food and lived more like other missionaries, though careful to avoid anything like extravagance. He had much better health than formerly. While not caring to give parties he liked to be able to show hospitality to anyone who needed it. He had built a pleasant house with a garden round it, and to this, missionaries from isolated stations, or those in poor health, often came for a quiet holiday. He met steamers, too, and brought new workers to his house for their first meal at least. Several L.M.S. missionaries spent their first few weeks in China with Mr. and Mrs. Foster, and so began life-long friendships.

Mr. Foster did not do much country work, but paid visits to out-stations two or three times a year. Before missionaries lived in Siao-kan, he often went there, and in his diary there are many records of being called out to save men from opium poisoning.

His methods were drastic. He made the patient drink as much mustard and water as possible, and kept him running up and down for several hours. He saved many lives in this way. Other records tell of preaching in the streets to crowds, and of spending three hours examining candidates, and then baptizing five or six out of the large numbers brought forward by the preacher. He felt it an important part of country work to help the preachers to grow in knowledge. Later, when in charge of the work in Wuchang, when he went to Hsien-ning, he gave the preacher there a certain book of the Bible to study between his visits, and on this he examined him when he next went there, explaining any difficulties the preacher may have felt in the passage. A sad part of this country work was enquiring into disputes between Christians, or into alleged cases of persecution by heathen. He generally succeeded in settling these troubles without getting the redress the aggrieved party hoped for, teaching that Christians should not press for their rights, but by patience and meekness commend the Gospel of Christ.

He felt the great importance of city work, and preached daily, often twice in one day, to the floating congregations in the Hankow chapels, where men from half the provinces in China came and went. Many stayed the whole hour, which he generally spent in preaching, and some asked intelligent questions. He liked to get such listeners to go with him to a small room at the back of the chapel for a quiet talk after he had finished preaching. Besides this daily preaching and the charge of two day schools, he took his share in Sunday services, both English and Chinese.

In his journal for 1886 there is this entry: "Resolved by God's grace to cultivate as I have never done before and by every means in my power, meekness and sympathy, especially towards the Chinese." Mr. Foster believed in never taking offence and in ignoring rudeness in others; there is an entry in his

diary of 1890, written in a repentant spirit. He writes: "Made a Chinaman in a shop apologize to me for calling me a devil. Felt profoundly ashamed afterwards. God grant that I may never act so wrongly and so foolishly again." In his early years in China, he had not found it easy to be patient with trying coolies, and generally had to repent of hasty words or temper, after having much to do with this exasperating race of men. But in late years, even in leaving Kuling with much luggage amid a noisy rabble of coolies, he kept quite calm and patient, and in nothing was his growth in grace more noticeable.

In 1888 the L.M.S. had opened work in Chungking, which seemed then very far inland and difficult of access. Mr. Wilson* was in charge at first, and after six years, when he had to leave the station, it was difficult to know how the work there was to be carried on. Mr. Foster offered to go, despite his nervous fear of the rapids, up which the long boat journey had to be made. His offer, however, was not accepted, as it was thought better to appoint Mr. Owen† to that station. The same year Mr. Foster declined a call to Union Church, Hongkong; he felt the great importance of work in inland China, especially in the large cities.

He took infinite pains in bringing out a primer for teaching ignorant Chinese to read. Instead of the ordinary foreign-made sentences, his were all quotations from proverbs or simple phrases from the classics, which he verified painstakingly before inserting them in his little book. Later on he incorporated many of these into his *Elementary Lessons in Chinese*, a book for teaching foreigners something of the written language. His theory was that pronunciation of this being unnecessary, it could be easily learnt in England or America, or on a voyage, and the knowledge of it would be very helpful to missionaries on their arrival in China.

* Rev. J. Wallace Wilson.

† Rev. William Owen.

Miss Green had returned from England with Mr. and Mrs. Foster, but she never became strong enough to resume her missionary work, and that first summer was so ill, that the doctor expected each day to be her last on earth. In those days there were no trained nurses in Hankow, and Mr. Foster often sat up part of the night with her. She did recover marvellously, enough to allow her to return to England, where she lived for nearly another year. This was by no means an isolated case of nursing. When any missionary in Central China was ill, Mr. Foster offered his services in helping to nurse, and not only missionaries, he frequently sat up with other sick folk, and was always ready, not only to read and pray with those who were ill, but to minister in any way he could to them in their need.

The year 1891 was a sorrowful one. His eldest sister died in April and his mother in October. Also Mrs. Foster had to go to England for her health, having lost her voice for several months, and she was away for half a year, during which time there was a strong anti-foreign feeling in Central China and riots occurred in Wusueh, where two Englishmen were killed. During Mrs. Foster's absence, an American lady, Miss Stowell, took charge of the girls, and Mr. and Mrs. Nicoll of the C.I.M.,* who had had to leave their station, because of riots, were glad to live in the house. That year there was anti-foreign feeling throughout China. In June there was a meeting at the British Consulate to consider means of defence in case of a riot, and the Consul called in ladies and children to live in the British Concession. It was a custom for many years with Mr. Foster to write a text every day in his diary ; that day the text chosen was : " In the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion, in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me." Having several young girls in the house added to the natural anxiety at these times. One

* China Inland Mission.

evening, after the little ones had gone to bed, they were hastily dressed and taken with the older girls to the riverside, close to a steamer, by which they were to flee, if the rioters, who could be heard in the distance, came on to the Concession. Happily they were prevented, and the roar of the mob died away to the great relief of those who were in charge of the children. Another time, two Wesleyan missionaries arrived at Mr. Foster's house at midnight, as the Consul would not allow them to remain at their home in the native city. The text that day recorded is: "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."

On questions of mission policy Mr. Foster did not always agree with his colleagues. He felt that when a preacher had been dismissed for some grave fault, he should not be re-employed by the Mission. Some felt that, though he might not be employed again as a preacher, at least for many years, yet he might be taken on as a school-teacher. From this view Mr. Foster strongly dissented, and in many cases time proved that it would have been better to have taken his advice.

He was much exercised over the need of a lunatic asylum in Central China. The only one in the whole Empire was in Canton, and the miserable state of lunatics was appalling. Tied up or chained in Yamens, there was little hope of their recovery, while the asylum in Canton showed that a large proportion might be restored to health and reason. He wrote in his diary: "The thought was strongly borne in upon my mind, that it is both desirable and possible to erect a lunatic asylum in Shanghai on certain lines which I noted down. I talked to Hill about it, and he sympathized, but said one man must organize and put it through. As a tribute to Christian charity and benevolence, standing out amidst the worldly and un-Christian civilization of Shanghai, it would bring glory to the Lord Jesus, and for that cause I

cherish the idea even more than for the purpose of benefiting the insane. I thank God for this lesson learnt from George Müller." It was a great disappointment to him that he could not succeed in getting such an institution started.

In 1892 there were letters in *The Christian* on the subject of "Cheap Missions." The writer advocated new missionaries keeping only one servant and using him for their teacher. Much as Mr. Foster felt the desirability of missionaries living cheaply, he felt this would not do, and he wrote of the importance of missionaries learning to speak Chinese like educated gentlemen and not like coolies, and also of getting to know the thoughts of the scholar class by careful study of the ancient books of China, which, of course, a servant could not explain to him. He felt, too, the danger of spending time on work which could be better done by servants. Young men who came out in a cheap mission spent some days in papering their Chinese house, and he spoke seriously to them about redeeming the time, and preparing for work by careful study of the language. He kept up his own study of Chinese for many years, noting in his diary how many hours he had given to it each day, even when he had returned from his third furlough.

He greatly enjoyed visits from George Müller, founder of the Bristol Orphan Houses; Isaac Sharp, who was visiting the Friends' Mission Stations, and other saintly men, who stayed at one time or another in his house. In those years missionaries spent all the hot weather in Hankow, and in the intense heat there was much sickness. In 1895, the brightest of his girls, Lily Mesny, died in July, and in August the youngest of the L.M.S. missionaries, Mary Hart. But greater sorrows were to come the next year. Mr. Foster's dearest friend, David Hill, passed away in April: it had been an ideal friendship of twenty-five years' standing, and the grief of the survivor was very great. Mr. Hill died of typhus, caught during

visits to hovels at night time, distributing relief. In June, Mr. Foster was recalled from Siaokan by the news that both the Hankow doctors were dangerously ill with typhus ; he hurried back in the intense heat. There was no railway in those days, but the plain being flooded he went direct by boat, and on arrival heard that Paul Turner's short life on the Mission field was already over, but Dr. Gillison, to the surprise of everyone, recovered, to the great joy of his many devoted friends.

The troubles of that sad year were not over : in August Mr. Terrell died, after a very short illness, in Siaokan. Directly Mr. Foster heard of his serious illness, he started out in the terrible heat to go to him, but passed on the way at night the boat bringing in his coffin for burial in Hankow. Later he took the young widow and her little boy to Shanghai, and saw them safely off for England, attending to the winding up of their affairs in China, as he also did to the affairs of several other missionaries who left China at different times, taking an infinite amount of trouble in disposing of their furniture, books, etc., to the best advantage. Three years before this he had escorted a young widow, belonging to another Mission, to Shanghai, and seen her on board her steamer for home. He never shrank from any trouble if he could help anyone. This made his friends afraid to ask him questions that might involve tiresome research before they could be accurately answered. He never just gave his own impressions if, by looking it up, he could get facts.

That same sad summer Dr. Mackay died and several little children were very ill, one at least, little David Hill, dying. He was the son of J. K. Hill, nephew of the David Hill, who was Mr. Foster's greatest friend. With so much sickness and so many deaths, it was a great relief when a sanatorium was started at Kuling, in an upland valley, 3,500 feet above the sea. It is easily reached from Hankow ; a night on

the steamer takes one to Kiukiang and from there, by chair in four or five hours, Kuling is reached. Of late years a motor to the foot-hills has shortened the journey. At first Mr. Foster feared that it might prove a snare to missionaries, keeping them too long from their work, but he came to realize what a blessing it was to very many, enabling a number, who could not otherwise have remained in China, to work on for many years. Men took their wives and families up and then returned to their stations; the L.M.S. made a rule that all men might have one month's holiday, besides the annual committee meetings, which went much more smoothly when held in the cool, healthy air of Kuling, than in the stifling heat of a Hankow summer. The Mission built two bungalows in 1896, and later on others near them, but Mr. Foster had a great objection to living in public, and rather than share those crowded houses he decided to build his own bungalow, which he did in 1903, giving it to the L.M.S., as he did the house he built in Wuchang, only stipulating that he and his wife should have the use of both as long as they needed them.

Kuling is a most beautiful place, surrounded with green hills, with clear streams dashing down the valleys. Here the nights are always cool, and even during the day the heat is not unbearable. For some years Mr. Foster would only spend a short time at Kuling, going back into the heat, to let younger men get a good holiday. When he was at Kuling he was not idle; he was generally asked to preach to the large foreign congregation, chiefly missionaries, and he felt this an opportunity not to be lightly used. Some years he gave lectures on Bible subjects, such as "Symbolism and Metaphor in Scripture," or conducted an adult Bible class. He much enjoyed walks and talks with men from other stations and belonging to other societies, who were like himself, students of the Bible. But he did not go to Kuling

till after his third furlough, some years after the place had been opened as a sanatorium.

On his fiftieth birthday fifty-seven Christians united to give him a very handsome porcelain screen, scrolls, etc. He records in his diary: "Very thankful to God for them and for this proof of their kindness; but horribly humbled to think how little of their appreciation of anything I have done for them is deserved by any spiritual service I have rendered." His colleagues and other friends also sent presents and letters, which cheered him greatly, so the diary records, "Much refreshed in spirit to-day by the kindness of friends and by their assurances of their appreciation of my efforts to serve God."

At this time he was troubled by the light view taken by some missionaries of the evil of polygamy. His diary records how an elderly man came to see him, wishing to be baptized. He was a polygamist. "His wife is about his own age. His concubine is about thirty, and has two sons. I told him to ask God to solve the difficulty for him, but said that in the meantime we could not receive him. I asked him if a repentant polygamist, with six wives, should be baptized? He said, 'Certainly not.' With five then? With four, etc.?" Mr. Foster felt it very wrong to let a man choose which he would retain, when, according to Chinese law, there was no question about which was the lawful wife, those taken later being on quite a lower footing. Another entry at this time shows how he dealt with troublesome listeners in the chapels. "A scholar seemed disputatious on the question of ancestral worship, and insisted that Jesus was only a western sage. I answered him too sharply, but directly I stopped preaching my heart smote me and I asked him into the guest room, and had a quiet talk with him and gave him a copy of St. Mark and of the 'Gate of Wisdom and Virtue.' May God make me less imperious and hasty in speaking to people. It were better for objectors to go away

thinking that they had triumphed over me, in argument, than for me to go away knowing that I had dishonoured Christ by want of meekness and gentleness." Six days later he records that this man called to see him and seemed much pleased with the tract that had been given him. The diary adds : " May the Lord save this man."

It often records penitence for what might seem to others very minor faults. Thus : " Yesterday I saw a man lying in the street, apparently very ill, but did nothing for him. During the night and early this morning my conscience smote me for the neglect. Going undesignedly along the same street again this morning I saw the same man and felt at once it was God's mercy giving me the opportunity of remedying the fault of yesterday. I took him to the hospital. He died on the 28th," two days later.

He was often called upon to officiate at funerals, and many a letter was written to the relations of the dead in the homelands, his being frequently the only intimation they had of the death and burial of their loved one. Sometimes he was asked to look after graves, and he took infinite trouble to find some old disused cemeteries. He sent photographs of more than one grave home to people he had never seen. He did not grudge time taken over works of sympathy, but he did grudge time spend over work that could just as well, or better, have been done by a business agent, and he wrote several letters, urging the Home Board to appoint such a man for Central China.

CHAPTER THREE

1897-1907

IN 1897 Mr. Foster went home for his third furlough. On all his voyages he took services on board. He preferred travelling by the P. & O., for this among other reasons, that there was always a service in the first-class saloon on Sunday mornings, and he could get permission to have evening service, also, in the second class. He frequently preached twice each Sunday, if there was no other missionary on board, and on some voyages he held a daily Bible-reading in the second-class saloon. Many young missionaries remember their first voyage to China with thankfulness, because Mr. Foster was on board with them.

Before going to England, some of their girls left to become governesses; of one of them Mr. Foster writes in his diary: "I took her up to Hanyang, Lord Jesus bless Thy lamb, whom now for eight years we have tended for Thee, and save her to Eternal Life." Mr. and Mrs. Foster took with them the two youngest, putting them to school in England for a year and a half.

When leaving for England he resigned the treasurer-ship of the Mission, and was very glad to be relieved of what had been a burdensome duty, taking up much time, which he would willingly have spent in more direct missionary work. During this furlough Mr. Foster devoted much of his time to the anti-opium cause, publishing his examination of the Royal Commission on opium which convinced many people of the unsatisfactoriness of its summing up of the

evidence given. He spoke at influential meetings at Lambeth Palace, Exeter Hall, and many other places.

In these ways he exerted a great influence among earnest people at home, and materially helped to put an end to Britain's connexion with the opium trade in China. He also did much deputation work for the L.M.S.

Hearing that the Congregational Church at Abingdon had been without a pastor for some time and was in great need of help, he offered to go there for the summer as honorary pastor, and succeeded in getting a congregation together again, so that, after three months, they were able to call a pastor when he left.

When in England, he always made a point of looking up the children of his friends in China, who were at home or school. This time he was asked to distribute the prizes at Sevenoaks, where many of the daughters of missionaries are educated. He asked which children had no relations with whom they could spend the holidays, and then invited two boys and two girls to go to the seaside with himself and his wife and the two girls they had brought home with them. All had a very happy time together. During this furlough Mr. Foster acted as chaplain to the Free Church Schoolboys' Camp at West Runton in August. He thoroughly enjoyed ten days with the boys, and made real friends with the officers.

After a year and a half at home, he returned to Hankow; but almost before he had settled in to work there, he was asked to move to Wuchang, as Mr. Cousins,* who was then in charge of that station, was resigning. He agreed at once, and moved there in May, 1899, writing in his journal: "I believe this is of God, and that great possibilities are open to us, if we be faithful, prayerful, single-minded and true." He decided to give up the Eurasian school, as soon as the four girls then in his charge should have finished their education. By this time other schools had been

* Rev. A. D. Cousins.

opened to which girls of this class could go. At Wuchang, one of the first changes he made was to have the list of Christians who subscribed to Church funds, with the amount of their donations taken down from the wall, where it was hung in a conspicuous place, that all might see their generosity. He believed in anonymous giving, and thought collections taken up at each service on Sunday much more satisfactory than ostentatious giving; he suspected also that some who promised to give did not really do so. His own giving was largely anonymous. Soon after settling in Wuchang he engaged a teacher, and his diary records this prayer: "Lord, help us to remember our responsibility for this man's soul." He always had Chinese prayers with the servants, and felt deeply when they seemed untouched, after years with him. At Wuchang the work was rather at a low ebb, the congregation small, and there were very few members. However, there was an earnest preacher, Mr. Wang, a man after Mr. Foster's own heart. He had not been through a theological college, but had left business to become a preacher; he was a Bible student, and was much respected by heathen as well as by Christians. Mr. Foster took a great interest in the hospital work, then under Dr. Davenport, frequently taking prayers in the wards and speaking to out-patients. He was very glad to welcome, at the end of that year, a lady doctor, Ruth Massey, who made her home with Mr. and Mrs. Foster for a time.

The next year Mrs. Foster opened a boarding-school for girls, which, in course of time, had a hundred pupils, who did much to fill the church on Sunday and to improve the singing. The church had to be enlarged, and the number, both of men and women, steadily increased. The Boxer troubles in 1900, however, did much to break up the work temporarily. Patients dropped off, children left the Mission schools, and on June 14th, the L.M.S. premises at Tsao-shih were looted and burnt, Dr. Wills escaping to Wuchang.

The anti-foreign feeling became so strong that in July the British Consul ordered British ladies and children to leave. Mrs. Foster took their three youngest girls to Japan. Some of the Missions in Wuchang not only sent away all their foreign workers, but even some of their Chinese to Shanghai for safety. Mr. Foster refused to leave the city ; this did much to prevent a scare. Dr. Wills and Dr. Peake spent part of the summer there, too. The Chinese were leaving in numbers, but many heathens, as well as Christians, decided to remain in Wuchang as long as Mr. Foster did so. After all, the Viceroy managed to prevent the Boxer outbreak doing much harm in his province, but the general opinion then was that he would not be able to do so, and that there would be a massacre of all foreigners, as there had been in many places in the north.

During this trying summer Mr. Foster suffered from fever. His diary records that he drew up a brief will and sent it to England to his brother, to provide against the contingency of riot. One day there was a terrible fire in Hankow, and it looked as if the expected trouble had commenced. Great anxiety was felt for friends besieged in the Legation in Peking, and it was an unspeakable relief to hear that they were safe. Towards the end of the summer refugees began to arrive in Hankow with horrible tales of sufferings undergone in escaping from the Boxers. One party of fourteen from Lucheng reported that six had died on the way or had been beaten to death. Mr. Foster attended funerals of some of these true martyrs in Hankow, and was much touched later on to read on the tombstone of one of those who had suffered most, " Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or sword ? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."

Some of the younger members of the L.M.S. and all the ladies had been sent away, but in October they

returned, unspeakably thankful to find the storm of persecution had not reached their stations. Mrs. Foster was the first back, Mr. Foster meeting her steamer at half-past six in the morning at Hankow. The text he wrote that day in his diary was: "Sing praises to God, sing praises, sing praises to our King, sing praises."

That month he began a practice he had started some years before, of making Thursday a quiet day. This meant spending as long as possible in his study in prayer and devotional reading. Tiffin being in his opinion an unnecessary interruption, he just had tea and a slice of bread in his study.

In 1899, at the instance of the French Government, certain official standing was conceded to Roman Catholic Bishops and priests, the same privileges were tendered to and even urged upon Protestant missionaries by the Chinese Government. Mr. Foster felt very strongly that these should not be accepted. In 1900 he wrote to his dear friend, Mr. Bryson: "I was glad to hear in Shanghai that you were very strong on the right side on the Missionary Status question. It has now been settled over the heads of the Board by Lord Salisbury, who ought to have taken counsel, of course, with all the leading missionary societies, instead of with the Archbishop of Canterbury. But I should have liked to know how our Board would have been advised by the Committees in China." The majority of L.M.S. workers in Central China were in favour of accepting the privileges offered by the Government, but Mr. Foster felt so strongly about it that he, with two others, sent home a minority report, stating their reasons for not wishing to do so. In this as in many other cases where he had to fight a hard battle, he found that in time his was the course accepted. Now it would be difficult to find many who would take the other view of the status question. He wrote to a friend: "The longer I live in China, the more I feel the need of ministers

having faith in their principles and sticking to them, believing that God in His own time will justify them, however trying to faith and patience the period of waiting may be."

On May 21st, 1901, he wrote in his diary : " Heard yesterday of Mr. Chalmers's murder in New Guinea. To-day I am the same age that my beloved, most beloved, friend, David Hill, was when he died. What thoughts crowd into my mind of the infinite goodness of God in giving me such a friendship, and allowing me to come into contact with such a life, and of shame and confusion of face at the contrast between lives such as Hill's, Chalmers' and John's—so full of service and of strong purpose—and my own."

At this time he was lecturing at the Divinity School. This, being in Hankow, took up a great deal of time, but it was work he much enjoyed, and even after the school moved seven miles further off to the Griffith John College, he gave courses of lectures there. His chief aim was to inspire the students with a love for the Scriptures, and to put them in the way of wise study of both Old and New Testaments. He was anxious they should feel they had a positive message to preach, and should not chiefly denounce idolatry and heathen customs. The meaning of the Cross and the revelation of Christ as the Way were the themes on which he never tired of dwelling.

Writing to his dear friend, Mr. Ridgeley of the American Episcopal Mission, he says : " May the desires of your heart be fulfilled in regard to your theological school in Hankow. The need for men of the class you are now seeking to train impresses itself increasingly on my mind, men who will be pre-eminently preachers of the Word and who will do something to make the Bible to the masses in China what it has been made through the ministry of preaching to multitudes in our own western lands." In another letter to the same friend he wrote : " I am convinced that the Christianity, which to-day

the Church, for the most part, is accepting and pressing on the attention of the world, is something utterly unlike the Christianity of our Lord Himself, and that He Himself as the One, Only Way to the Father, is getting more and more relegated to a back place in the Divine scheme of redemption, while His call to a life of absolute self-renunciation on the part of all who would be His disciples is set entirely in the background as not applicable to the aims and life purposes of the average Christian."

In 1902 he was much touched by the presentation of an album, containing photographs of all his colleagues, which was given to him by them, to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of his arrival in China. It was a happy year; he records in his diary, "Impressed in prayer this morning with the multitude of causes for thanksgiving suggested by simply looking round my study—photos of Father, Mother, Amy, Hill, Dr. Russell, this study, my scrolls, books, not to mention the light and other reminders of God Himself, the box with Communion Vessels, my pile of papers respecting numberless duties to be fulfilled, these and dozens of other causes for adoration and thankfulness and humiliation came crowding into my mind as I looked around." His "humiliation" was on account of such experiences as that which gave rise to the following entry: "Impatient with —— for his dishonesty and lying. Poor soul! and I acting as his judge; not at all as his saviour."

During the Manchu Dynasty, Triennial examinations were held in all the provincial capitals, and students, who had already obtained their B.A. degree, came from all parts of the province to sit for the examination. Out of the five or six thousand who go in for it only seventy or eighty could pass, but as this was the only door to official life, large numbers always competed. This was felt to be an unique opportunity for reaching the student class. In September, 1902, Mr. Foster and representatives from all Protestant

Missions in the three cities, with Chinese Christian helpers, waited at the gate of the examination hall with packets of books to give to the students, as they left the building. Thirty-two hampers full of books were given late in the evening and very early the next morning. This was an occasion when Mr. Foster believed in free distribution. As a rule, he thought it much wiser to sell books, as being paid for, they would be valued and read. He regretted that free distribution had revived in late years, so making sales more difficult.

It was always his custom to offer tracts for sale, especially when visiting the country. On journeys, too, he got into conversation with people everywhere ; many of the boatmen, with whom he crossed the Yangtse, will never forget the tall foreigner who so often talked to them. The city gates were a trial to him. He sometimes found them shut on his return from Hankow. Then he had to walk outside the city on a rough road in the dark to another gate, which might be opened. He records, how once, on reaching this, he had to give in his card ; he regrets that he said that he came from the Mission, as some Chinese, who also wanted to get into the city, said, " The foreigners are more powerful than we are." The diary records : " Then, too late, I saw all this was wrong. Lesson. Be more watchful about delays in Hankow, of an afternoon. Leave in good time at all costs, but, if too late, go straight to the Wen Chang Men (the furthest gate), which is always open till 8 p.m."

After 1900, Mrs. Foster went each year to Kuling for July and August, during which months the boarding school was closed ; but Mr. Foster would never take such long holidays, and only came for three or four weeks, though a good deal of this time was taken up by the L.M.S. annual committee meetings. Mr. Foster did not like committees, and always feared expressing himself too strongly, or some subject coming up upon which he could not conscientiously agree

with his colleagues. But in 1903 there is a happy entry in his diary: "The meetings came to an end with a deep sense of thankfulness on the part of all for the something better than harmony which prevailed. For myself, I feel as if the prayers and longings of many months had been now realized in a new sense of our oneness in the bonds of Christ with all members of the committee."

Mr. Foster much enjoyed the beauty of Kuling and the quiet time among the hills. There are many entries in the diary like the following: "Delightful walk and meditation in the Cow Valley." As years went by, his delight in the beauty of Kuling increased. He would exclaim, "How blue the sky is! Just look at those hills against it!" The sunsets were a great joy. One day, walking along the top of a ridge of hills, with Mrs. Foster, they saw their shadows on a great white cloud that filled the valley beneath, and as they watched a rainbow appeared, encircling their heads. This interested him greatly. When the large trumpet lilies were in bloom, he would rush off the path up steep places to gather them, even when over seventy years of age.

He was much interested in the building of the church at Kuling, and used to say it was the finest example of unity in the world. When the building became too small for the congregation, he was largely instrumental in getting a beautiful large church erected in 1904, in which all denominations of Christians met for united services, the Liturgy being used when the preacher wished it; but Episcopalians being only a small minority, this was not very often. Mr. Foster did not think Sankey's hymns suitable for a congregation chiefly composed of missionaries, and was very glad, when at his suggestion, the decision was arrived at, in 1905, to change it for "Worship Song." His spirit was much refreshed by meeting so many like-minded friends at Kuling year by year, and he appreciated the opportunity for preaching to his fellow

countrymen. While in charge at Wuchang he preached to the heathen, not only in the chapels, but in the streets of the city. He often visited a country station, Hsien-ning, a small town surrounded by beautiful scenery. Here he had quiet times for meditation and helping the preacher to study his Bible, work which he much enjoyed. He writes during one visit there : " Almost every visit to Hsien-ning has been associated with some new realization of Truth—the unity, mission and fellowship of the Church, the revelation of Messiah, the meaning of prayer, the personality of the Son of God. I would pray now for a new realization of the power of God in enabling me to attain that life of self-control, love, method, etc., which has been so often showed to me." The journey to Hsien-ning was sometimes dangerous. The diary on one occasion records : " On board the launch on the lake we were in great danger, owing to the violence of the storm. The ship got on shore in a shallow place, the captain being out of his course. For a long time it seemed as if we might be knocked to pieces before we got off. Then the machinery broke down and the fire had to be extinguished before it could be set right. The captain seemed beside himself, but God gave me great calm and the expectation of a deliverance I could not understand."

The windings of the Hsien-ning river greatly lengthened the journey, and Mr. Foster often spoke of trying to get canals cut from one bend to another, which would have shortened the trip by one half. He called on the magistrate at Hsien-ning and spoke to him about it. He replied it was impossible, because of the people's superstitions. He spoke sadly of the suspicions of the people, which made them suspect every plan he had for their good. Mr. Foster adds in his diary : " I was made to feel what a support faith in Christ brings, in enabling people to persevere in right courses, believing that truth must prevail

and we can work for Him without looking for thanks or approbation from men."

That same summer there is a record in his diary of how he spent his time, with the following reflections upon it: "Buildings, accounts, etc., etc., are alike my cross and my snare. The boys' school is my discipline, and a burden laid on me by Christ, Who said: 'Feed My lambs.' Preaching and due preparation for it are that form of active service for which God specially set me apart. Bible study is my delight and my danger, but also my support. Writing is a form of preaching and delivering my message concerning the practical things of the Kingdom, and the advancement of Christ's cause in China. It includes possibilities of literary work, but needs to be carefully watched. Prayer is the foundation of all success, the fountain of all blessing and vitality in the work." It is a strange idea that there should be danger in Bible study, but probably he meant that he enjoyed it so much he was apt to neglect other duties for it. When a Chinese lad, in whom he was interested, turned out badly and could not be employed in the Mission, he reproached himself for it, recording the event in his diary thus: "Sent (him) to be put out as a farm labourer. Another failure through neglect of prayer. How different his life might have been if I had had fellowship with Christ in his salvation."

About this time Mr. Foster was much interested in the project for a school for foreign children at Kuling. He was one of a small committee which succeeded in starting the Anglo-American School in March, 1905. He went to Kuling and spoke at its opening. It was a great disappointment to him that it could not be continued long, but when the C.I.M. school took its place he was most thankful. He had full confidence in Mr. and Mrs. Lindsay, under whose charge it was, and grieved deeply when the school building was burnt down in 1914, and when Mr. Lindsay died the year following.

He was much exercised at this time about coolie labour in the Transvaal, and took a long time writing a paper about it, adding in his diary this prayer : " God use it to change the minds of many people who have never reflected on the subject." He sent letters to *The Spectator* and *The British Weekly*, the two home papers which he liked best, strongly disapproving of coolie labour in Africa.

It was entirely from a sense of duty that he undertook the duties of treasurer of the Mission. He grudged the time taken from more spiritual work, and as years went by and his brain moved more slowly it was a real trial to him to keep the accounts of the Mission. One entry in his diary shows this : " This evening I balanced the Society's accounts with a sense of unutterable thankfulness. Thus the duties of the treasurership are practically finished, and a burden that has weighed heavily upon me for four or six months is taken off. It has been a spiritual discipline, and I trust it has taught me some lessons that will mould the rest of my life. For all this I can thank God even while I think with shame of my failures in regard to it, specially that of complaint, when had I taken it rightly, as a Divine discipline and appointment, my soul would have been silent unto God."

In the different missions in Wuchang there were several men deeply interested in theology. They formed a club which met one Friday each month, when a paper was read and discussion followed. Dr. Jackson, an Anglican, Mr. Warren,* a Wesleyan, and ten others were regular members, and most interesting were the meetings to all concerned. Mr. Foster has a note in his diary naming the teachers who had moulded his thinking, or touched his conscience and helped him to know God. They are Dr. McLeod Campbell, Dr. Wace, Canon Liddon, Mrs. Butler, Bishop Westcott, Bishop Lightfoot, Canon Mosely, Thomas Erskine, Mr. Spurgeon, and Bishop Selwyn. He constantly read Wesley's hymns, finding them

very helpful in his devotions. But the book he studied most was, of course, the Bible. He carefully underlined the quotations from the Old Testament, in the New, and from one book to another in the whole Bible, using different coloured inks and ruling the lines neatly.

Most of the missions in Central China asked him to address meetings on special occasions. He spoke at the graduation of the student at the Union Medical School, of the Divinity students at Boone University, of the nurses at the giving of their certificates. He addressed the Y.M.C.A. at Wesley College, and the girls at the David Hill Memorial School in Hanyang. He preached on the occasion of the opening of the new chapel in Siaokan, and his sermon later on in that day to the lepers will not be readily forgotten by those who watched their faces, as he spoke of the Lord, Who will change the body of our humiliation into the likeness of His glorious body. His addresses were always well suited to his audiences. He would speak to students, who by their English education had been raised above the position of their parents, on the life of Moses, who used his superior advantages to deliver his own people. And when speaking to boys and girls, just before the holidays, he frequently urged them to help their busy mothers and teach their little brothers and sisters to be as useful as possible in the home.

In 1907 the Centenary Conference was held in Shanghai. Mr. Foster made several speeches. When a Resolution was presented about founding a Christian University to contain schools of Law, Medicine, Engineering, Agriculture, Forestry, Architecture, Pedagogy, Mechanical Arts, etc., Mr. Foster said, that while he was in complete sympathy with the desire to give instruction to the Chinese in almost any subject affecting the welfare and prosperity of mankind, he was anxious under present conditions to see the rightful place of prominence given to Theology,

the Queen of Sciences, and to such subjects as History, Literature, Law, Language, Political Economy, and what were sometimes called the Humanities, rather than to mechanical arts and such things as chiefly affected material progress. He moved as an amendment that after the words "to contain schools of" the following should be substituted for the words of the original resolution, "Theology, Law, History, and Political Science, Political Economy, Arts and Literature, Science, Pedagogy, Engineering, Agriculture, etc." This amendment was carried.

Mr. Foster was the Chairman of the Committee of Memorials, and, as such, had to draw up four important ones. He spent much time upon them. The first was a declaration to the Chinese Government, respecting the spiritual and philanthropic object of Christian Missions, ending with a petition for complete religious liberty. It was not easy to draw up an apologia for Christianity on which the five hundred delegates to the Conference, representing almost every known Protestant denomination in Christendom, would agree, but Mr. Foster's paper was accepted by them all to his great delight. The other memorials were a letter to the Home Churches, one to the Chinese Church, and another on opium.

During the Conference he heard of the death of his sister Ellen, who had been such a help to him in his childhood, and with whom he had corresponded ever since. Mr. Foster felt her death keenly, and kept up the correspondence with her daughters till his last illness.

CHAPTER FOUR

1908-1919

IN 1908 Mr. and Mrs. Foster went again on furlough. This time Mr. Foster spent some weeks at Cambridge, and did a good deal of deputation work for the L.M.S. This was his fourth and last furlough ; he returned to Wuchang at the end of 1909.

Soon after this a deputation from the Society came out, consisting of Mr. F. H. Hawkins and Rev. G. Currie Martin, Dr. Cochrane visiting the stations with them. It was decided to start an advisory council in China, and Mr. Foster was chosen as the member to represent the Central China district committee. He went with the deputation all round the stations, but it was not long before he felt out of touch with the new methods, and he resigned in 1911, remaining, however, in Wuchang, and still taking his share in the work. The Board earnestly desired him to withdraw his resignation, but he had already reached the age of sixty-five, which had been suggested as a suitable time for resignation, and he refused to reconsider his decision. He believed in making decisions prayerfully, and then abiding by them. Few things tried him more than constant changes of plans and policy in fellow workers. He gave over the superintendence of the work in Wuchang to his young colleague, Mr. Rowlands, and having before this built his own house in Wuchang, he felt free to stay there after his resignation. Preaching to the heathen was still his chief work ; in a letter written when he was sixty-seven he says : " Yesterday I preached what, I think, must

have been the longest sermon I ever preached in my life. It must have been over two hours in length. Being at the Fu Kai (the street preaching chapel), people were free to go and come as they liked, so none had any cause for complaint. I think some of them stayed all through, or nearly so, but others went out and their places were filled with newcomers, and then I left the boys' school teacher to carry the preaching on."

Mr. Foster spoke at the Coronation service held in St Paul's Cathedral in June, 1911. This is the largest Chinese church in Central China, and is the cathedral of the Central China diocese. This year he was also much interested in a scheme for a Christian university for Wuchang. Lord William Cecil came to China about it and stayed a day or two with him. It was a great disappointment to Mr. Foster when the scheme fell through. He felt the need of better scholarship among the missionaries in China, none seemed to have time for prolonged Chinese study, and he looked back to the days of Morrison, Medhurst, Legge and John Chalmers, proud that there had been such men on its staff, but sad that there was no prospect of equally great students arising now. He had hoped that the starting of the Wuhan University would have made this possible.

In the autumn of this year (on October 10th) the Revolution broke out in Wuchang. The city gates were shut, and incessant rifle firing and fires in different parts of the city made the suspense very trying. On the third day the city gates were opened a foot or so, to allow the Mission girls' school to take their pupils out, and across the river to Hankow. Mr. Foster went to the bank of the Yangtse with Mrs. Foster and her girls and then back to his lonely and dangerous home. A few days later northern troops arrived and battles took place not far away. The bombardment of Wuchang was daily expected, and as Hankow was likely to suffer from the return fire,

the Consul ordered British ladies on to steamers, which went a few miles down the river. The bombardment did not take place then, however, and they soon came back, but while expecting it, Mr. Foster remained in Wuchang till, Hanking being burnt to the ground, it seemed as if he were more needed there than in Wuchang. He went to the C.I.M., where Mrs. Foster and many other missionaries were staying. The English service was sometimes held in the house. One Sunday he notes in his diary: "The firing of cannon and rifles made it inexpedient to have the service in Union Church." The text he wrote in his diary that day was: "God is unto us a God of deliverances."

He got a pass for going to Wuchang and frequently crossed the river, though boats were fired at by both sides and the barbed wire made it difficult to land and get into the city. The Red Cross had a launch which went to Hanyang to bring wounded soldiers to the Hankow hospitals, and churches and chapels were full of the wounded. Mr. Foster went to Hanyang several times, and on the last occasion, when Hanyang had fallen, he carried wounded men to the steamer, and they only just managed to escape being swamped by the retreating army, who came rushing to the river bank.

Many missionaries were delighted at the Revolution and the establishment of a Chinese Republic, but Mr. Foster was not at all. The bloodthirsty massacre of innocent Manchus seemed to him to bode ill for the new regime, and the type of officials who took large salaries for mismanaging affairs made him anxious for the future of China. Many were very young, and in some instances the sudden prosperity led them rapidly on the downward path. Polygamy, gambling and drink were the ruin of many.

He felt strongly that the time had not come for the abolition of extra-territoriality. While justice was rarely obtainable in Chinese law courts, anti-foreign

feeling often ran riot, and Chinese prisons were impossible places for foreigners to exist in.

He also objected to handing over too much power to Chinese Christians in Church matters. As long as they required foreign money he thought the power to say how that money should be used should lie with the foreigners, and that self-support and self-government should go together. He always consulted with Chinese Christians about Church matters, but he did not approve of majority votes in Church councils deciding important questions. It was not only in money matters that he felt this. Even preachers and teachers are still not competent for the most part to decide such questions as whether polygamists should be admitted to the Church or not. He felt a knowledge of Church history and a wide outlook were essential, and greatly deplored some of the decisions arrived at by councils composed largely of uneducated men.

Anything like toadying to the rich made him very unhappy. To see a rich man received into the Church, when his character was by no means Christian, was a deep grief to him. He longed for a pure Church, even if it was a small one. He spent much time in revising Church rolls, striking off names that should not be there, even when it led to letters from the Home Board, deploring that the work was going backwards and not forwards, comparing it with past years, when people were baptized with a shorter probation, and Church rolls were not revised for a long period. He never believed that the progress of the Kingdom of Heaven could be gauged by statistics, and refused to fill in numerous papers sent to him asking for the latest figures. In February, 1912, Mr. and Mrs. Foster returned to Wuchang and worked on as before.

Mr. Foster was often consulted by younger missionaries, when they were not sure as to which course they should take. He rarely gave definite advice, telling them to seek it from above. He would counsel them

to pray earnestly, making sure that their will was unbiassed, and that they only wished to do what was right ; then he told them to write down all the pros. and cons. they could think of and take time before making up their minds finally. When once made up, he felt it was wrong to change it, unless change of circumstances threw fresh light on the case. He often advised young workers to read John Foster's essay on " Decision of Character."

Mr. Foster had been a member of the Central China Tract Society for many years, sometimes presiding at its meetings, but in 1912 he resigned from this also. He had increasing dislike of committees, and felt that too much time was spent on organization and statistics that might have been much more usefully employed. He did not believe in the inspiration of majorities, and when convinced that a certain course was a right one, held to it though in the minority of one. He had been, for some time, on the Editorial Committee of the Chinese Recorder, but now resigned from this too. It was a great relief to him when he recorded in his diary : " Resigned from my last committee."

He was much interested in the Term question. For a century missionaries had been divided on the question of the right words to use in Chinese for " God " and " Spirit." Mr. Foster felt strongly that it was a question for good scholars to decide, and not to be settled by a majority vote, many of the voters being but slightly acquainted with the Chinese books. When the Bible Societies decided only to print editions with the terms approved of by the majority, he felt this was unfair to the large minority, who could not conscientiously use these terms. They were a compromise which probably pleased none of the best scholars, the term for God being taken from one party (Shang Ti), and that for Spirit (Ling), from the other. Mr. Foster was a strong believer in the personality of the Holy Spirit, and felt that this word " Ling " was not a personal term, and only implied influence,

so he would never use it. The use of this term was not the only reason why he did not like the Revised Mandarin Bible. He felt the revisers were not sufficiently good scholars in Greek and Hebrew, and that they had not been careful to keep to the same translation for the same word whenever possible. Only men trained in careful Cambridge methods would have pleased him as translators. Though feeling it far from perfect, he used Dr. John's New Testament to the end, in preference to the revised.

The Episcopalians not being by any means the largest Church in America, Mr. Foster objected to their calling themselves the American Church. But he still more objected to the use of the title "Chung Kwoh Sheng Kung Hwei" (Holy Catholic Church in China), as the distinctive title for Chinese Episcopalians; and when there was a meeting of Bishops at Kuling, Mr. Foster, with representatives of other Missions, called on them and spoke very plainly on the subject. He felt that arrogant claims of this kind made unity very difficult. The way in which the Church in Hankow (St. John's), where he had ministered for many years, was taken entirely out of the hands of all but episcopalians, was a great grief to him. He and a Presbyterian doctor had been elected Trustees, presumably for life, but a meeting was called, unknown to them, and packed largely with people who never came to church, a new Committee was elected and the American Episcopalian Mission was asked to take over the services. Mr. Foster sent in his resignation, and felt so strongly about the matter that his diary records his conviction that when next the St. John's question is agitated, he had better take no part privately or publicly in its discussion.

In 1914, he was asked to become Honorary Pastor of Union Church, Hankow. For some time the building formerly called the Sailors' Rest had not been much used by sailors, a very few foreigners being employed

on the boats coming up the Yangtse, compared to those in the early days of the Port, when numbers of ocean-going vessels loaded there with tea. So the building was used as a Union Church, and when a Church was formed, they invited Mr. Foster to take charge of it. After two or three years they decided to build a larger Church. They could not have the use of the Rest any longer, as it had been sold, with the adjacent Mission houses by the L.M.S. Mr. Foster was keenly interested in this project, and greatly helped in the carrying of it out. A fine building was opened in 1917, free of debt, and Mr. Foster continued to be the Pastor.

Living in Wuchang this was not easy; he often sorrowed over not being able to pay more pastoral visits, but those he did pay were costly. It was no easy matter to get from Wuchang, after business hours, and yet have time to pay calls and get back before the city gates were closed for the night. He would often return tired out, after an absence of several hours, and say that he had only been able to find one or two people at home; and if the river was rough, he disliked the journey very much. He rarely failed to keep a preaching appointment on this account, but the strain was great; kind friends at the C.I.M. did what they could to help, by making him welcome for the night, when he was too late or too tired to return to Wuchang.

During his early life in China, he refused to ride in chairs, and when jinrickshas came in he did not like them any better, feeling that men should not be used as if they were beasts of burden. But in his last years he had to give in and use both chairs and jinrickshas, though he did so as little as possible without crippling his usefulness. When going up and down the hill to Kuling he walked a great part of the way even when over seventy. On his seventieth birthday he records: "A day long to be remembered. A. and I invited to an afternoon reception at Mrs. Gillison's

to meet all members of the L.M.S., when Bonsey and Wilson spoke most kindly and I was told of an ulster to be presented to me, and a Communion Table and chairs to be presented to Union Church in memory of this day and an address to be inscribed. To A. was given a beautiful afternoon tea-kettle, etc. We returned together by boat, thanking God for His great goodness."

During his last year in Wuchang, he was much troubled by the decision of the Directors to close the medical school in Hankow. He felt strongly that it should have been well staffed. It did a splendid piece of work, turning out Christian doctors worthy of the name. He always felt that a Mission that did little benevolent work could not fully show the Christ life, remembering that He not only preached, but went about continually doing good. During his first furlough Mr. Foster had consulted the Secretary about the possibility of his returning to China for philanthropic work, feeling the awful need in a heathen land where the poverty and suffering are appalling. This project fell through, but he never ceased to impress upon all the great importance of medical missions.

Dr. John's prolonged illness was a great grief to him, and he sometimes feared he might have a similar breakdown, but his intellect was keen to within a few days of the end. The Great War saddened him unspeakably; the state of religious life in Germany was like a nightmare to him. Many choice young lives were cut short from which he had hoped great things, and his heart went out in sympathy to the bereaved relations and friends. Just before England entered the war he wrote: "What terrible news is coming from Europe of war and fighting. I hope the nations will not all get involved. The longer I live the more irrational and devilish war seems to me to be. The revelation of the future is to be that the lambs are more influential than the wolves, and that

the Lamb in the midst of the throne is to dominate everything, not by surrendering His own character, but by making human lions and tigers see how brutal and diabolical their methods are, and that He is the one able to be Lord of Lords and King of Kings." All his life he felt so opposed to the military spirit that he would never give a box of soldiers as a plaything to children, but he was glad that Britain entered the war when she did, feeling that in the awful wickedness and oppression then prevailing it was her duty to spend and be spent for the defence of the weak and the salvation of the world. He looked upon an army as he did on policemen, as necessary, because of the sin in the world, and he did not expect the League of Nations to put an end to war for ever. During the war he took a leading part in intercessory services held each Fourth of August at Kuling, and rejoiced greatly over the end of the war, though too ill when peace was actually signed to say much.

He had a serious illness in the summer of 1917, when living alone, not long after Mrs. Foster had gone to Kuling. Kind friends brought him up the hill, and he soon recovered, but was never quite so strong again. The next summer Mrs. Foster felt she could not go to Kuling without him, and they decided to move there altogether. Just before leaving Wuchang he had to mourn the death of the preacher, Mr. Wang (whose funeral service he conducted), and also the almost sudden death of Dr. Jackson, who had been a close friend for many years. Wuchang friends, both Chinese and foreign, did all they could to show their love at parting, and prevailed upon him to be photographed in many groups, as well as by himself. The last time he preached in Union Church, Hankow, and also in Wuchang, he took for his text the apostolic benediction, II. Corinthians xiii. 14.

The last year of his life was one of the happiest. He was not naturally cheerful, and as a young man he suffered much from depression; all through his life

he had to fight against this, but as he grew older the fruit of the Spirit in him was joy, he increasingly delighted in Bible study and prayer, in the beauty of God's world and in intercourse with friends. The light shone more and more unto the perfect day; he was far happier in old age than in youth. After moving to Kuling, he was asked to take charge of the work there among both Chinese and foreigners till the next season. There were good congregations all through the winter, the pupils of the American School attending regularly. Mr. Foster often preached twice in the day, once in Chinese and once in English.

During the week he spoke frequently at the English prayer meeting, and took prayers at the Chinese hospital. In bitter cold and deep snow he might be seen slowly making his way to the Chinese street. He rarely missed an appointment because of the weather. He felt the cold a good deal and had a bad cough during the winter, but worked on till May 19th, 1919, when he preached for the last time, in Chinese, as he would have wished it to be.

After that he gradually grew weaker, but did not realize for some time that the end was near. He once said: "I have had such a happy year here, I should like another, but the Lord shall give that which is good." He often quoted that verse, and was ready to go or stay, as God willed. He suffered much at first from sciatica; later he had congestion of the lungs, and though he did not then have much actual pain, the extreme weakness and distress in breathing were very trying; yet he never murmured, and was touchingly grateful for all that was done for him. One evening, when it seemed hardly likely that he would live through the night, Mrs. Foster read the 23rd Psalm to him; as she finished with the words, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever," he added: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." He often said, "That is beautiful," when a Psalm or hymn had been read.

Miss Bell, who frequently took night duty, read to him very often, and in the day he sometimes asked for his Bible or Greek Testament, and put on his spectacles, liking to have the beloved Book in his hands, even when he was far too weak to read.

Kind doctors and nurses did all they could, and N., whom he loved as his own child, was always at hand to help. When his voice was not clear enough to be understood he asked for a pencil and wrote, "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father, Christ is all in all." That was the Gospel to him, Christ the revelation of God. Mrs. Foster was alone with him when he quietly breathed his last on July 30th. The next day his tired body was laid to rest in the beautiful cemetery on the brow of a hill, with a wide view of mountains and plain. Over five hundred friends were there. Mr. Bonsey read the service, Mr. Sparham and Mr. J. K. Hill taking part, and the whole assembly joining in singing: "For all the saints who from their labours rest," as the golden sunset brightened in the west. He had written years before, "I should like my tombstone to bear upon it any text you may choose, only let it be one pointing upwards and not downwards, to God and not to myself. I. Corinthians xv. 57 has always seemed to me a very suitable text for a Christian's grave." So that has been chosen.

"Thanks be unto God which giveth us the
Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

SELECTIONS FROM ARNOLD
FOSTER'S WRITINGS
SECTION I—MISSIONARY

CHAPTER FIVE

FORTY YEARS' EXPERIENCE*

As I look back on the forty years and more that I have passed since I first arrived in Hankow, many thoughts come into my mind—thoughts of the changes that have come over China and the Chinese people in that time, thoughts of the changes that have come over the Missionary work, thoughts of the changes that have come to myself in my own life and in my own ways of thinking and of working.

A Changed China.

I. Let me speak of some of the changes I have seen in China during the last forty years, and of that which led up to them.

Few, if any of you, can remember China as it was when I first arrived here. *You*, too, have seen great changes, and you feel that the China of to-day is a different place from the China of your boyhood. But when changes are going on all round us, they sometimes come about so gradually that we do not realize

* A lecture to the Boone Divinity Alumni, Wuchang, 19th February, 1913.

at the time how great they are. It is only as we get older and can look back over long periods of thirty, forty, or fifty years, that we can realize what a great difference there is between the world of to-day and the world that our fathers and grandfathers lived in and into which we were born.

I am going to speak to-day on changes in China ; but I would remind you that China is not the only place in which great changes have occurred. The whole world has changed, and is changing ; and during the past fifty years the changes everywhere have been very noticeable. On the whole, they have been changes for the better ; but they have not always been so. Some changes, both in China and out of it, have been changes for the worse. It is very common to hear people talking of all great popular movements as " Progress " ; but not all movement is really progress. " Progress," of course, means not only going forward, but going forward in a right direction. I think it may be said in regard to all matters in which there has been real progress among men, the progress has come to us through winning a larger outlook on God's world. Great progress was made possible in Astronomy, when men began to look at the heavens through a telescope, instead of only with the naked eye.

It was believed once for example, that locusts came from shrimps, and if shrimps on the sea-coast were not destroyed, it was believed that locusts would multiply and would eat up the green crops inland. But when men began to observe for themselves, they found that locusts have no more connexion with shrimps than monkeys have with oysters. Once more, it has been said, and believed by some men, on the authority of ancient books, that the leaves of certain trees turn into insects, and even scholars who knew nothing but what they could learn from ancient books, repeated these stories, and, in China, at least, hardly anybody but persons engaged in the cultivation

of the mulberry and the silkworm had ever observed or thought seriously about the wonderful process by which the egg of every moth turns into a caterpillar, the caterpillar passes into a sort of chrysalis grave, and from that chrysalis comes forth a wholly transformed insect—a living moth possessed of wings!

But if progress in the knowledge of what is generally meant by "science" came to the world through looking more intelligently on the works of God in the heavens above us and on the earth around us, progress of another, and of a really much more important kind, only came to men, when they began to go outside their own land, and to study the languages, books, laws, manners and customs of other nations. A man who thinks he knows everything that is worth knowing, will always be a very proud and conceited man, and generally a very ignorant one. We, all of us, whether nations or individuals, Churches or private Christians, have a great deal to learn from others, and as long as we despise others, God will leave us to shrivel up in our own exclusiveness and narrowness. "Open Thou mine eyes," the Psalmist said, "that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law," and a prayer like this should be continually in the mouth of every man who aspires to be wise, and to be a teacher of others. "Lord, open Thou my eyes—the eyes of my mind, of my understanding, and my heart, to behold the wonders of Thy working everywhere, and especially in the ways, and laws, and thoughts of men of other ages and of other countries, that through them I may learn some of the wisdom that Thou hast given to them, which, as yet, I have not acquired."

Yes, it is in the thoughts of men, in the history of men, in the noble aspirations and self-sacrificing deeds of wise men and good men in other lands, as well as in our own land, that we shall learn the way of true progress. No progress worthy of the name is possible to those whose only desire is to live to themselves,

and to shut themselves out from the rest of mankind, or only to use other people and their knowledge and experience, in order to turn these things to their own advantage and to make themselves rich and strong.

It would take too long to speak much now of the way in which, in the providence of God, China was brought more than a hundred years ago, much against the wish of her rulers, into contact with the great nations of the West. I say, "in the providence of God," for we must remember that there is at all times a providence of God, the Sovereign Ruler of the whole world, watching over all the nations of the earth, and over the history and the destiny of each one. God's ways are, indeed, often very hard to understand, as His doings and His judgments are often very terrible for the time being; but they are always done in love and with a gracious purpose, and, in the end, all wise and good men will acknowledge this; but in the meantime, in God's hands, we all have to suffer till we learn the lessons that He has to teach us.

The changes in China which have stood for progress, have come about when its people gained a larger outlook on the world, as God's world. And when I speak of the causes that, in China, led up to this larger outlook on God's world, and in consequence, to those great changes I am talking about, I cannot doubt that, humanly speaking, the chief cause was China's coming into touch with the Western nations. The way in which this came about was very dreadful. The foreign nations that came to China and demanded admittance, did many things that were very wrong, and I am not here to make excuses for them, but, as in ancient days, God taught the Jews many things they did not know before, by means of wicked Egyptians and of wicked Chaldeans, so in later times, He has dealt with other nations in a similar way. I sometimes wonder what would have happened, if, in those days only good foreigners had come to China, to settle in the land, whether as merchants or as

missionaries ; and if they had only used right and good methods for opening up China. The process might have been much longer, and the rulers of China would not have made it easy for them ; but if it had succeeded, it would have been much better every way.

You will see that in all I have said so far, I have not exactly kept to my text about "Forty years of Mission work." But the truth is, the work of Missions, like the life of the Christian Church, cannot be altogether separated from the life of the nation, to which missionaries go, and amidst which the Church has to live ; and on the other hand, the history of a nation cannot be understood, without some reference to the distinctively Christian influences that have been at work modifying that nation's customs, and the thought of its rulers and people. The influence of Christianity in China has been very great in many ways. We cannot begin to measure it by asking how many people have been baptized, or how many Christian Churches or schools have been opened. In connexion with missions there is always a slow, silent, unobserved power at work, changing the thoughts of men, unknown to themselves, long before they become Christian.

When I came to China, there were things that nobody in China wanted, which now everybody wants. There were things about which nobody then thought at all, while now everybody is talking about them. Both results have come about through Christian influences. There were other things that people valued very highly, which now they scarcely value at all. Before these changes came about, our work as missionaries was very slow, and very difficult. It was into the midst of an unchanged China, and a China that did not desire any change, that I came.

In those days, if missionaries wanted to open schools, such schools as they wanted to open were not desired by the Chinese. The things the missionary wanted

to teach, nobody wanted to learn. Some missionaries said : " The only thing to be done for the present is to preach the Gospel, circulate the Scriptures and simple Christian tracts, and to open hospitals for the healing of the sick."

Even so, the majority of those who came to listen to the preaching came only out of curiosity ; and most of those who came to our hospitals and dispensaries came chiefly because they could get the foreigners' medicine for nothing, while Chinese medicine and medical advice had generally to be paid for.

Thus it came to pass that, for a long time, almost the only schools opened by missionaries were " charity schools," and the chief things taught in them were the same as in purely Chinese schools of the same class, with a few books on Christian doctrine added.

The mention of books requires that I should say something in passing of the great work done by some few missionaries, in those days, in preparing a worthy Christian literature, which later, largely through the agency of the Christian Literature Society, had a great influence in diffusing useful knowledge.

The Power of Preaching.

But to return to the work of preaching and to the difficulties connected at that time with education ; happily, even in those days, there were some missionaries who could not be discouraged in their desire to start good and efficient schools. " The Chinese," they said, " do not now value science, geography, or a knowledge of Western lands ; but they have *got* to value them : the day is coming when they will value them, and will be greatly influenced by them. We have now to lay the foundations of a sound system of education, mathematical and scientific, as well as classical, scriptural and general, whatever it costs us, either in time or money," and so they opened schools

for higher education. The first one, I remember, in this district, was the Boone School for boys. It had only been opened a short time when I arrived. The boys were not many, and I should think they were mostly small boys and poor ones; but that formed the foundation of the Boone University. A boarding school for girls was opened later; it also was only a small one, and there were considerable difficulties, I have no doubt, in carrying it on; but that, and other similar schools elsewhere, did something to show the value of education for women, and, what is more important, the value that Christianity puts on women, and on an educated woman's influence in the life of the family, and of the home, whether she be wife and mother, or daughter and sister.

But now I must say something about the deep and widespread influence that from the beginning has been going out from our work of preaching. It is by this means, as I think, far more than by any other, that the Gospel must be made to reach the poor, the ignorant, and the average man in China. I believe in preaching and I have always believed in it ever since, as a child, I longed to be a preacher myself, and still more since I began to preach in Chinese. Simple Christian books and tracts are of great value, and may go where the preacher cannot go, but no books can ever move and sway the minds and hearts of the poor and ignorant, as the living voice of the preacher may do, if in his own heart the preacher feels the power of Christ's Gospel, and if he himself earnestly longs to save men.

It must be remembered that while preaching Christ and His cross is the great object of the preacher, we cannot preach the simple Gospel so that men will understand what is meant by "repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus," without giving a great deal of very important but very easily understood information on many other subjects also. Thus our preaching comes like new light to dark minds

on all these subjects. It means preaching in words that all can understand, about God as the one only proper object of worship for man ; God as the Creator of Heaven and Earth and man and all things, and as the Ruler and Upholder of all. It means preaching about the greatness of man as made after God's likeness, about the fearfulness of sin, as rebellion against God's law, written in the heart and conscience of every man, and about the certainty of judgment to come. But it means also speaking about the evil results in the life of a nation of superstition and idolatry, and about the blessings that Christianity has brought to other countries, where it has been accepted. Men are moved by hearing how the Gospel has, in other lands, abolished slavery, uplifted women, introduced just laws and humane punishments, made provision for the poor and aged, opened asylums for the blind, the deaf and dumb, the leper and the insane, and has spread education and intelligence among the myriads of the people.

God only knows, and the last great Day alone will show what has been effected by public preaching in China—wherever it has been faithfully, intelligently and regularly carried on, in the way of enlightening the masses of grown-up men and women. In no other way would these people have been able to learn about such things and to take an interest in them. And then, remember, that many of those who listen in the great centres of trade, like Hankow, and Tientsin, being strangers from far off places, on returning to their homes, take back with them the word they have heard and the books they have bought in our chapels and preaching halls, and pass the knowledge on to those whom they associate with in their own towns and villages.

But if our preaching is to bear fruit, it must be preaching about God and Christ, about sin and judgment, and not mere denunciation of idols and of bad habits, or general talk about foreign customs and

political questions, or about the enriching of the country. God is One God, Christ is the one Saviour ; mankind is one family, the whole world is under one Divine government, sin is universal, and without faith in God, man cannot be right. It has been well said that science can never flourish or develop till people cease to believe in a multitude of gods ruling in different spheres of life, and come to believe in One God, Who rules everywhere, and in everything and Whose laws are everywhere the same. That sort of preaching has, I am certain, done much to pave the way in China for the appreciation, not only of Christianity, but of true science and true learning, and a true study of history and every other kind of knowledge and of wisdom, which God has made it possible for man to acquire.

Development in Missionary Work.

The work has grown. When I came to China there were no Protestant Missions working to the west of these three cities, or in Honan. The Societies represented here, then, were only three : the London Mission, the Wesleyan Mission and the American Episcopal Mission, and the number of foreign missionaries did not exceed a dozen. Gradually these and other societies have spread through Hupeh, Hunan, Szechuen and Kweichow and into Honan, Shensi and even Kansuh.

In 1871 there were only two small hospitals for men in Hankow, none in Wuchang. Now the number of hospitals has been multiplied many fold in these cities and Hanyang and in many other stations connected with the Missions working here. Women's Hospitals, an asylum for lepers, another for the blind, and other Christian institutions, besides evangelistic and educational and medical, as the Bible and Tract Societies, have been added, and are witnesses in large districts of Central and Western China to Christ's

compassion for the poor and sick and outcast, as well as for the salvation of all men.

So much for what I have myself seen of change and advance. I cannot but wonder as I think of it all! For people who only measure the progress of Missions by the advance that has been made in three or even five years, the extent of the advances will seldom seem very great, especially if they only look on it from outside, and have never taken any personal interest in it. But for men and women to whom this work has been the one great interest of a long life in the Mission field, and who, through a period of thirty, forty or fifty years, have watched, not only the progress of Missions, but also the course of Chinese history and the gradual unfolding of God's great plan for the salvation and uplifting of this, the most populous nation of the earth, the events of the past half century's missionary enterprise will be felt to have been comparatively rapid, and to have exceeded all that the most sanguine friends of Missions could have expected at the beginning of this period.

The movement that has taken place, as I said before, has not been all progress. No one is more conscious than the missionary of disappointments in his work. In the breaking up of old customs and old beliefs in China that were not good customs, and not true beliefs, there has been also a casting away, for the time being, of some customs, that were good, and a disparagement of old beliefs that were true, *e.g.*, reverence for parents, submission to rightful authority, appreciation of the wisdom of the Chinese sages and of their many great and noble sayings and ideals.

We must be patient. Christianity will, in due time, separate between the false and the true; it will teach men to base their ideas of duty on sounder foundations than they were based on before, it will bring to a new and more vigorous life every good thing that, for the present, seems to have been lost. Christianity is a religion of liberty; but liberty is not the right of

every man to do what he likes. That is only the liberty that lions and tigers and human ruffians delight in. The country in which everybody does as he likes will be one in which no good man would live if he could help it. We carry liberty, only when we seek to make men what God would have them to be.

CHAPTER SIX

THE CHURCH IN CHINA: 1807—1907.*

THE work of the past century may be roughly divided into two periods of about fifty years each. These correspond alike to different conditions of service in the mission field and to different conditions of faith, experience and knowledge in the churches at home. During the whole of Morrison's life in China (1807-1834) and during the ten years succeeding his death—a total of thirty-seven years—the work done was almost entirely of a preparatory character. A mere handful of converts had been baptized. In 1842 there were only six Chinese communicants in connexion with us. In or about 1844 it became possible for missionaries to settle at a few points near the sea coast, between Canton and Shanghai, and to preach and teach, but only within a very small and narrowly defined area. This state of things continued till by the Treaty of Tientsin, in 1860, a number of places on the great river Yangtse, or in Northern China, were opened to foreign residence. In the meantime, however, a number of young missionaries had been gradually gathering in Shanghai and were studying the language with a view to being sent farther afield directly the way opened. From 1861 the work moved steadily on, but even as late as 1865 the communicants in connexion with our missions did not exceed two thousand.

* Memorial to the Home Churches from the China Centenary Missionary Conference assembled in Shanghai, May, 1907.

The more rapid extension of missions subsequently cannot, however, be accounted for simply by a change of conditions in China itself. No fact, probably, connected with the religious history of the Anglo-Saxon race, and of some of the nations of Northern Europe, during the past forty years has been more noteworthy than the increased realization there has been in England, America and in Scandinavia, of the duty of the Church in regard to foreign missions. It is to a great deepening in the near future, of this movement, so natural as the outcome of a true understanding of Christianity and so essential to a healthy and continuous development of spiritual religion in our own lands, that we now look forward with the utmost hopefulness. We feel, and we desire to impress strongly on the Churches from which we come, the conviction that at the present time we are only at the beginning of things in the mission field.

The XIXth Century.

Little by little the Church has been led, under the guidance of the good Spirit of God, to wider and worthier conceptions than it was possible for our fathers to entertain a century ago, of what is involved in "preaching and bringing the good tidings of the Kingdom of God" to all nations, and it is now for us to realize these conceptions in life. The nineteenth century will for ever stand out in the history of mankind as one of the most eventful periods through which Europe and America and, in different and lesser degrees, Asia and Africa also, have ever passed. It has been a period marked in the West by vast strides in all branches of scientific and mechanical discovery as well as in other branches of human learning and material progress. It has been marked also by great advances in the intelligent understanding of the Scriptures and by a revival of vigorous, intelligent and aggressive faith, as well as by an enthusiasm, born of

religious conviction, for doing good and making war upon iniquity. We are confident that He who has cast our lot in such wonderful days as those in which we have lived and are now living, will surely show to His Church the spiritual significance of the advances we have alluded to and its bearing on the great missionary work of the future.

At present China is crying aloud for Western education, but apparently almost exclusively in the hope that by means of such education she will be able to rival the military and naval power of the West which she both dreads and also covets, and that she will be able also to possess herself of a wealth and luxury and mechanical ingenuity like that which she sees enjoyed by foreigners. Of a thirst for knowledge of any but material things which she must gain from the West we see but little indication. It is for Christians above all men to bring to the Chinese the education they crave, but an education imbued throughout with Christian thought, Christian motive and Christian influence; for this is the one thing China specially needs. It is for Christians to show to the nations, in connexion with the missionary work and by means of men specially set apart for such service, whether through literary or other special forms of work, what Christian civilization really means; that it is not the turning of men into nations of soldiers, or of plutocrats and millionaires, but the development among men of all grades of society of the qualities and blessings for which man was made, the riches of moral character, wholesome family life and good citizenship, self-control, self-respect and self-sacrifice, prudence, intelligence, and healthy ambition, mutual trustfulness, sound public opinion, and social progress. In forming a great nation's ideals, the inculcation of such virtues as we have named cannot safely be left simply to chance, or to the preacher in churches. Schools, colleges, Young Men's Christian Associations, sound literature, all must bear their part.

But to return to the state of our work in China to-day : the number of Christians at present connected with all the missions in China does not even approximately show the number of men and women who have come strongly under Christian influence and whose outlook on life has been modified by Christian ideals. But even the number of nominal Christians cannot be stated accurately. There is reason for believing those in connexion with the Reformed Churches to approximate in round numbers, to one hundred and seventy thousand persons. Some perhaps would give a higher estimate, others would give a decidedly lower one. In any case the number seems, it is true, small indeed in comparison with the hundreds of millions of the population of China, who remain unevangelized. But it must be remembered that in every country some very small classes of the community may for various reasons be vastly more influential than other classes that are numerically far larger. A little leaven has a potency in it that is not possessed by the much larger quantity of flour into which it is cast ; and grains of seed, however few, have a power to germinate and to multiply indefinitely not possessed by grains of sand however numerous. Without claiming for members of the Chinese Church that they are all ideal or even satisfactory Christians, we maintain unhesitatingly that amongst them are many noble men and women who, in point of Christian character and spirituality of mind, would be a credit to the Church in any land. In the Boxer troubles of 1900, as well as in earlier persecutions in China, the Church furnished Chinese martyrs whose testimony and sufferings have enriched the life and traditions of the Church Universal, and every missionary who has lived any length of time in China will recall, in addition to numbers of simple-minded faithful men and women whom he has personally known, individual cases of a really high type of Christian excellence.

Organized Hope.

It is to the Church itself, the living Christian community existing under very varying conditions throughout the empire and gathered together, humanly speaking, by many agencies, that our thoughts turn as to that in which the hope for China lies. A mere crowd of unrelated Christians would be a poor substitute for organized Christian societies. Heathenism has nothing to show that can compare to the vital fellowship of believers in the risen Lord. To gather men, women, and children into this fellowship is much, but to teach them when they have been gathered in, to help them rightly to understand and appreciate the privileges and the mutual responsibilities of the Christian life—this is a not less important and it is a far more difficult task. It is to this end that much greater attention must be given in the future than has been given in the past. Already some of the most promising boys and girls, young men and young women, in our high schools and colleges are from Christian families. Apart from the evangelistic work of the past, and its results in founding a Christian community in China, our schools, and especially our girls' boarding schools which are now a very important part of our work, could not possibly hold the place they do. But our Christian adults, not less than their children, need the guidance and shepherding of wise and faithful Chinese pastors and teachers. One of the pressing needs of the present situation is the training of such men. When we speak of the evangelistic work of the past, we use the word in no narrow or limited sense, but as covering all agencies for bringing the gospel of life to the Chinese, whether by the direct preaching of Christ, by the circulation of the Scriptures and other literature, by the Christ-like work of healing the sick and teaching the young, or by those object lessons of compassion and tender care which it is absolutely necessary that

missions should carry on—if (in the words of David Hill) “the symmetry and harmony and perfectness of the body of Christ” is to be faithfully presented before the non-Christian world—asylums for the blind and the dumb, for the leper and the outcast. “These things,” said Mr. Hill, “would, if put on a proper basis, reveal to the Chinese a more perfect Christ; and this is our great business, the true road to success, the vision of the perfect Christ! The beauty and symmetry of the body answering to the Head will soon win the Chinese from their lifeless images as no other revelation will.”

But all thorough work is costly, and if our primary schools are to be efficient, well-equipped, normal colleges, with good practice-schools attached to them, must be maintained by the missionary societies, in sufficient but in not impossible numbers, and with careful selection of the centres at which they are to be established. In missionary normal colleges for the proper training of Chinese Christian schoolmasters, students will have a chance of learning, as they will not learn in government colleges of the same class, the nobility of the schoolmasters' profession, and to value its priceless opportunities for moulding young lives. If, however, the teachers from these colleges are to be kept up to their work after they have been appointed to schools, they must for some years to come be superintended by foreign missionaries (each working, it may be, over a fairly large area), whose ability to superintend and direct such work will have been gained from a course of special and thorough training before they came to the mission field, and this should be these men's sole work. The principle here enunciated is one of wide application. In order to arrive at efficiency, whether in the matter of education or in any other department of effective service in the mission field, the necessary cost, whatever that may be, of producing efficiency must be paid and paid gladly; inefficiency, however cheap, must be studiously

avoided. The cost will not always be a cost in money, though frequently it will be that, and this fact has to be faced boldly. The question to be asked about any school, college, hospital or other Christian institution is not "How much money does it cost?" but "What good work does it do?" "What is it worth as a means for accomplishing the end for which alone it exists?" The theory that every form of work in the mission field must be done cheaply is an unworthy theory, and if unworthy, it cannot be necessary. It awakens no enthusiasm of self-sacrifice in the mind of people whose standard of excellence in every other department of life is not cheapness but thoroughness; least of all does it commend itself to the minds of people who themselves are in the habit of exercising strict economy and self-denial in their own personal expenditure for the very purpose of effectively accomplishing work for God that they know must of necessity be costly.

A Missionary's Distractions.

We pass on to notice the inefficiency that results from missionaries being expected to work under conditions that make steady concentration in work difficult if not impossible. To expect, *e.g.*, that a large school of a higher grade than the primary one, can be efficiently maintained when the responsible head has also other weighty responsibilities resting upon him, such as the charge of a country district in which he has to itinerate, is to do both kinds of work an injustice. Equally fatal to efficiency is it to assume that men whose special gift and call of God is to the ministry of the Word, and who desire to consecrate their whole lives to spiritual work, such as preaching and teaching, and acquiring an ever increasing mastery of the Chinese language in order to do so effectually, are the proper people to be put in charge of the whole book-keeping of a large mission and its

financial arrangements, as well as the work of passing goods through the Customs for missionaries in the interior and then forwarding such goods to their destination. Much smaller distractions than these were repudiated by the Apostles for themselves in the early days of the Church as a "serving of tables," which, while an honourable enough ministry for men specially set apart for such service in Christ's Church, was regarded, in the case of the Apostles, only as a distraction and not as the task appropriate to men who had undergone a special training by our Lord for work of a much more difficult and exacting nature. It is the decided opinion of this General Conference that, as far as possible, at every large centre there should be, as there are already in one or more of the largest and most economically managed missionary societies in China, agents appointed to take charge of all such duties as book-keeping, financial arrangements, superintending the erection of buildings, forwarding parcels and mail matter to the interior, etc., etc., and that wherever possible, ordained missionaries, medical missionaries, missionaries in responsible charge of colleges and high-schools, and missionaries set apart for literary work should be entirely freed from such duties as are referred to above, that they may concentrate their whole energies on the work proper to their particular office.

Once more, it is not helpful to the true efficiency of a mission that Chinese workers should be prematurely entrusted with work for which, in the judgment of missionaries on the spot, they are not competent. For some forms of service Chinese workers may be easily trained, in which they will be able to undertake work that in the earlier days of missions the foreign missionary had himself to do, and wherever possible this should be done. But in other departments of work it will apparently take many years before the work of the European or American can with advantage be devolved on the Chinese. To illustrate this point

also from the educational work of missions, the real efficiency of our mission schools, the kind of efficiency which will for many years make it impossible for Government or other non-Christian schools to rival them in the better class of students that the mission schools turn out, lies, humanly speaking, in the personality, the Christian personality, of the foreign teacher. So far as education is merely a matter of teaching certain subjects for an examination, Chinese teachers can be got who can do good work, but in so far as education means the maintenance of a high moral tone and of effective discipline in a school, or the imparting of knowledge with that enthusiasm for the subject on the part of the teacher which awakens enthusiasm in the pupils and a thirst for knowledge, it is very, very rare to find any ordinary Chinese teacher who has the ability to take the place of the missionary teacher, and experience does not lead us to expect that this type of vigorous and inspiring personality which is so often met with among teachers in the West, will be at once, or even in the near future, forthcoming in China simply because it is needed. In the meantime it requires to be clearly stated that the moral perils of large boys' schools insufficiently officered by competent foreign missionary teachers are very great indeed, and might easily make these schools a curse rather than a blessing to the missionary work.

Minimize Differences.

Closely connected with the topic of efficiency is the further question of co-operation and federation between different missions. No fixed rules can be laid down as to the application of the principle of co-operation, for to be effective it depends on subtle influences and spiritual forces that cannot be called into existence by mere legislation or in obedience to an abstract theory. The general position, however,

needs to be continually and deliberately kept in mind, continually made a subject of earnest and believing prayer, and continually made visible to the eyes of the Chinese, viz., that we all regard our fellow missionaries of other societies as serving, with us, one Master, even Christ, and that whatever may be our differences of view or of administration, it is our bounden duty frankly to recognize and honour one another as members of the one Body of Christ and as under obligation to Him to be mutually helpful one to the other in our respective spheres of working. We seek no unity that would impoverish the fulness of the life of the Church, but this one thing is demanded of us that we should love one another and act accordingly, openly and in the sight of all men. Happily in China there seems in almost every direction at this time a strong and growing desire among members of the missionary body to emphasize agreement and to minimize differences; to welcome opportunities for united action and to keep in the background, wherever it is not wrong to do so, disagreements on matters in which at present we cannot all move forward together on the same lines. Those who say otherwise, and who represent the missionary societies of the Reformed Churches, as appearing before the Chinese as a number of warring sects, are persons who simply do not know the facts. What they say proves conclusively that they must be completely out of touch alike with the life, the work and the aims of the missionary community.

Scholar-Missionaries Wanted.

Something should be said of the need that exists for the development of a Christian literature worthy, on the one hand of Christianity, and on the other hand of the literary standards of China. Never was there a finer field open than to-day for scholar-missionaries fit to take rank with Morrison, Medhurst, Legge,

Wylie, Williams, Chalmers, Edkins, Faber, Schereschewsky, not to mention others still with us, whose names will long be held in remembrance as leaders among the sinologues of the past century. The exact form of service to which such men would be led finally to devote themselves, cannot be too narrowly defined before they have had time to test, each for himself, the various needs that are waiting to be supplied. But we say, without hesitation, that advanced students of European classical literature, of history, of philosophy and of science in any of its branches, having once duly equipped themselves with the power to use freely the language of China, would not fail to find a sphere in which to give of their best to the service of God and His kingdom in this land.

A famous missionary of a past generation made it his motto to "expect great things from God and attempt great things for God." The "great thing" that we ask, and that in the vision of faith we must dare confidently to *expect* from God, is nothing less than that China may become a Christian nation. The term has, indeed, fallen somewhat into disfavour with many who realize how imperfectly Christian any single nation on the face of the earth to-day is. And yet Christians have only to live for some time among an avowedly non-Christian people, mixing freely with them, understanding their social life, their ethical and moral standards, and the state of public opinion, to feel that after all there is a wide gulf between a nation that acknowledges, even only outwardly and imperfectly, the Christian law, and one that deliberately repudiates the name, the commands, and the worship of our Lord. We say this in no spirit of disrespect for any of the great nations of Asia, nor do we deny to the Chinese, the Japanese, or others, the possession of many virtues, of many attractive qualities, and of much that is beautiful in family life. But some of the conceptions that are most familiar to ourselves,—the holiness of God, the awfulness of

sin, the dignity of man, the sacredness of human life, the nobility of self-sacrifice, the importance of truth in religion—not to speak of any more distinctively Christian thoughts—all these are strange and almost unreal conceptions to the non-Christian nations, and they exercise no influence in forming their current standards of excellence.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DENOMINATIONAL DISTINCTIONS.

I COME now to speak particularly of the question of denominational distinctions as, during a long life in China, I have observed them and their working in Mission churches. And, at the outset, I must avow my belief that, whatever may be the disadvantages connected with denominational distinctions—and some of these are unquestionable—the present outcry against denominationalism tends greatly to divert attention from the real cause of lack of unity amongst Christians. Whether at home or abroad, this is nothing else than want of love and of the mind that was in Christ. Because of this lack we fix our hopes on improved plans for bringing about, through formal federation, united organizations and schemes for mutual compromise on points of doctrine or of ecclesiastical order, a state of general uniformity in Mission churches. Such devices and expedients move on an altogether lower plane of Christian conception and thinking than that on which emphasis is laid in the New Testament. “By this,” says Christ, “shall all men know that ye are my disciples if ye have love one to another.” It is, I imagine, within the experience of most missionaries of long standing that some of the closest and most intimate friendships existing in the Mission Field are often friendships between persons belonging to different Missions. The closely observant eyes of the Chinese do not fail to observe where the missionary finds his affinities, and wherever the Chinese, Christian or

non-Christian, sees all the indications of brotherly love and affection and sympathy between one man and another, he pays but little heed to those denominational distinctions, which are supposed to mar the unity of the Church, and, indeed, unless he is specially told of the existence of such distinctions, he probably will know nothing about them. This is true even when, as is unhappily sometimes the case, ecclesiastical traditions and church rules on one side or the other prevent two men who realize that they are one in Christ, as well as one in personal friendship, from uniting publicly in the highest services of the Church at seasons of common worship. The keen eye of the Chinese will very likely notice this strange anomaly in a Christian friendship, and he may secretly wonder what it means, but, assuredly, he will think far more of the unity which he knows to exist and which is patent to all observers—the unity of brotherly love, mutual esteem and general sympathy in Christian work—than of the fact that in some of their common acts of worship a certain aloofness seems to characterize the relation of these two friends one to the other. But quite apart from intimate personal friendships existing, we will say, between a high Episcopalian and a Baptist, or between a strong Presbyterian and a Plymouth Brother, wherever personal relationships are what they should be, and what in point of fact they generally are among missionaries of one Society and those of another, the Chinese, who in all such matters are far more observant than we ourselves are, do not fail to notice the fact. On the other hand, I think the Chinese neither understand nor feel any special interest in the particular differences that distinguish—say the Methodist Mission from the Congregational, or both from the Presbyterian Mission. One cannot say quite the same for differences that immediately strike the eye. I have had a heathen listener to my preaching in the street insist before a whole crowd on the vast difference between my

teaching and that of a missionary friend who was in the habit not only of immersing his converts, but apparently of doing so, at that time, in an improvised bath ! In vain I endeavoured to explain that we both preached the same truth and both alike admitted by baptism to the fellowship of the Church. Before the mind of this listener, however, there loomed up large the thought of the bath, which he declared he had seen, and which he declared my missionary friend spoke of as most important, while I had not even alluded to it in anything I had said in his hearing.

I have no doubt that Chinamen who attend an Episcopal service where the minister is robed in white, notice at once the difference between this form of worship and one in which the minister appears in his usual dress. But while these facts will certainly prove the childish importance which an uninstructed Chinaman attaches to an outward ceremony, they appear to afford no sufficient reason why baptism by immersion should be exchanged for baptism by aspersion, or *vice versâ*, or why a surplice should either be assumed where it has not hitherto been worn, or discarded where it has hitherto been used, merely in order that Christians should seek to show before the average unintelligent heathen the essential unity of the Church of Christ by such poor mechanical expedients.

Love, the Real Bond.

The truth is that the real danger of discrediting the unity of the Church may quite as easily arise within the limits of the same society and in the midst of the same forms of worship, as amidst separate societies and in connexion with varying church customs. What matters it that two missionaries are united in the same outward system, if all the Chinese around them know that they bear no love one to the other ? What profit is to be expected from federation of churches and societies unless the people, whose work

is involved, have learned by spiritual discipline to bear and forbear with new fellow-workers trained in different surroundings from those with which they are familiar, and possessed of utterly different views on many questions of the greatest importance? Let not anyone too hastily assume that of course Christian workers on the mission field can always easily, and without strain, work with anybody and everybody possessed of the same missionary ambition, to save men and to bring to the heathen the knowledge of Christ. Not only is it not the case in point of fact; it requires but very little knowledge of human nature to enable one to realize that to live peaceably with all men, even with all Christian workers, needs much patience, much forbearance, much lowliness of mind, and that such blessed fruits of a high Christian character will not necessarily always be forthcoming in connexion with votes of majorities on Mission Boards deciding on plans for abolishing denominational distinction. Only love can solve the real problem of church unity, and love does not always necessarily work along lines of uniformity.

Let me give two illustrations of love solving difficulties which votes of majorities or formal attempts at federation are often unequal to dealing with.

Story of a Bishop.

Some years ago an Anglican Bishop, with very definite objections to joining in any non-Anglican celebration of the Lord's Supper, was visiting at a Presbyterian Mission Station at a place only reached by a steamer calling at certain intervals. The following Sunday was the regular Sunday for a monthly or quarterly communion service to be held in the Presbyterian Church. The steamer by which the Bishop had arranged to leave was due to start on Friday or Saturday, but Sunday morning came and the steamer had not yet arrived. It seemed probable

that it had been detained by bad weather. The Bishop was much troubled in mind at the thought of absenting himself openly from the communion service, and thus showing a spirit of disunity before his friends and their converts; he saw, however, no light in the direction of violating the rule he had always acted on of not attending nonconformist communion services. The Presbyterians saw the difficulty, and with the thoughtful consideration of true Christian sympathy suggested that it was possible to announce to the congregation that the communion service would be deferred for a week, without assigning any reason for the change. The Bishop was much relieved, and thanked them heartily for this concession to his scruples. The week passed, however, without any steamer arriving, and it was evident on the next Saturday evening that the same difficulty would have to be faced again on the following day as on the preceding Sunday. It was now the Bishop's turn to show that the spirit of unity can surmount, in the power of love, difficulties that in the abstract seem insurmountable. He accordingly told his friends that he could not doubt now that it was neither their duty to postpone the communion service again for his sake, nor his duty to absent himself from a service which he had thus in the providence of God been led to face. He accordingly joined with them.

To those who know nothing of the deep conscientious scruples of many churchmen in regard to this matter, and to those who only despise people who have such scruples, the incident may seem void of significance. To others it will appear in a different light, and they will feel on the one hand, that no formal scheme for denominational compromise could ever have been operative in a case of this kind (for the strict churchman would never have been a party to such a scheme in the abstract), and on the other hand, that this lesson of spiritual oneness thus learned in the school of life, would to all concerned give a new view

of the union of Christ with His people and of His people with one another at the Lord's Table. Can any one doubt that if afterwards the whole situation had been explained to a convert from heathenism at that Mission Station, the thing that would have impressed him would have been not the divisions of Christendom, but the wonderful unity of Christ's people and their loyalty to conscience and to the law of Christ's love?

For myself, I must say that it is increasingly along the line of right feeling and thoughtful love, treating generously and frankly each difficulty caused by denominational distinctions as it arises, that my chief hope for a universally prevailing visible unity among Christians moves. Spiritual forces, it is true, move much more slowly than improvised plans of "moral compulsion" devised by man, but it is also true, in more senses than one, that the "kingdom of God cometh not by observation"; not while impatient man is saying "it is here," or "it is there," or "where is it?" and pointing to, or enquiring for, some visible organization that is obvious alike to the eyes of all men; not while men are elaborating schemes for differentiating between necessary and unnecessary articles of belief, that will include all the Christians whom the framers of these schemes think ought to be included, and shut out only those whom these same persons think are too "broad," or too "narrow," to be comprehended in their plan. Not thus cometh the kingdom, but, like the King himself, it "cometh" in an hour and in ways that are least expected, for in truth both the kingdom and the King are ever present in the conscious experience of those who love one another, and who, without regard to name or party, are ever trying to be helpful to all who in any way are seeking only the glory of the Lord and the welfare of men.

One other point should be always borne in mind, viz., that even though such names as "Lutheran," "Calvinistic," and "Wesleyan," which have meant

much to the church in the West, should die a natural death in China as they probably will, it cannot but be that as the church takes root in China, and as great teachers, thinkers, orators, organizers, from among the Chinese spring up and influence deeply the conscience and religious thought of the nation, China will have its own problems of denominational distinctions to face. Names of men of great personality and great religious influence will certainly adhere to different religious societies in the Chinese church unless Chinese regenerate human nature is free from some of the weakness that regenerate human nature in other lands has shown. May these great Christian Chinamen, when they arise, be saved from dividing their followers into hostile camps, or doing anything to violate the unity of the Spirit !

And this leads me to the last point on which I wish to dwell. It is my deep conviction that the welfare of the church in China demands that we who know something of the slow growth in Western lands of the Christian ideal, and of the full apprehension of truth as it is in Jesus, should refrain absolutely from seeking to suppress by any system of uniformity, differences among Christians that are not necessarily due to any perversity or self-assertion of human nature, but that correspond with various aspects of the truth in all its greatness and manifoldness.

A Parable.

I will venture to conclude with a parable. In the year 1897, I was returning to England on furlough, and I chanced to travel by the last mailship from China that would reach London in time for the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. From each port at which we stopped, we took passengers who were anxious to be at home for that great occasion. From Hong-kong, Singapore, Penang and other British possessions along the route, we took small contingents of Asiatic

soldiers, subjects of the great and beloved sovereign of the British Empire; these, along with companies of soldiers from other races and lands, were to be part of the procession in which the Empress of India on that memorable June day would pass in state through London to St. Paul's Cathedral to return thanks to God for the blessings of her long reign, and then back through a long and circuitous route to her palace, that as many of her subjects as possible might share her joy and that she might share theirs. Chinese, Malays, Sikhs, Cingalese, and others in their characteristic uniforms produced a picturesque scene on board that steamer. But more impressive far was the quickening of hearts and of sympathy amongst all the English-speaking passengers on board, gathered from many lands, as from port after port they joined our party between Shanghai and Gibraltar. Arrived in England one topic was in everyone's heart and on everyone's lips—the Diamond Jubilee of our Queen, the mother of her people, the one who, as all felt those days, joined us British folk in one family. Our political parties, our ecclesiastical divisions, seemed during that never-to-be-forgotten week to have vanished into thin air. We saw nothing in the papers then of “conservative” and “liberal,” “churchman” or “dissenter,” Englishman, Scotchman, Irishman, Welshman, or Colonial,—at least nothing implying that we were *not* all one family. All seemed full of mutual admiration. And then how proud everyone was to see foreign princes, ambassadors, and grandees of various hues, all for the nonce admitted to our family party, and the Americans there of course in numbers as our cousins. Those were days when to thousands and tens of thousands of Christian eyes the heavens were opened, and they saw the vision of the King of kings and of the days to come when He shall reign visibly over all hearts. Even over the thieves and criminal classes of our great London on that Jubilee day the spell of the good

Queen's personality seemed to have passed, for along all the route of her procession hardly a single case of theft or violence occurred. What had happened to the nation? It was deeply in love : love to one great majestic central figure, who had through a long life lived for her people and had gained their enthusiastic devotion, and this was the way in which love to the Queen evinced itself in a love that stilled all party animosities and petty strifes amongst her people, and while leaving everyone still in possession of his full personality and personal beliefs and convictions, had for the time dwarfed all difference by the incoming of one great sense of unity which bound all together in a common bond to the beloved sovereign. "And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also."

CHAPTER EIGHT

INTENSIVE EVANGELISM*

"INTENSIVENESS" and "extensiveness" both alike belong to the very essence of the evangelistic enterprise when that is rightly thought of, just as the heat of the sun and the sun's light-giving power are both of them parts of the very nature and composition of the fire which makes the sun to be what it is to our world. Each of these two properties of the sun is, of course, in a sense, distinct from the other, though also intimately connected with it, and neither is able to do the work of the other, or can by itself accomplish the same result.

To make, then, any comparison of the respective values of heat and light in the sun, or of "intensiveness" and "extensiveness" in evangelism, as if these were or could be rival forces, is impossible. The true value of each consists in its relation as a complementary force to the other.

What we can do, however, is to compare popular ideas of extensiveness in evangelism on the one hand and of intensiveness on the other with some accepted standard of evangelism where intensiveness and extensiveness both appear in their true proportions and right relations and then see whether popular ideas on the subject conform themselves to this standard or not. If not, we may well ask whether these popular ideas ought not to be reconsidered and readjusted.

* A Paper read before the evangelistic conference in Hankow, January, 1910.

What is "Evangelism" ?

In speaking further of "evangelism" it will be well to be sure that by that term we are all thinking of exactly the same thing. To some, evangelism seems to stand for little more than an oral preaching of a Gospel of individual salvation to every man, woman, and child in the world in such a way that each one may definitely have an opportunity—as people say—of either accepting or rejecting for himself, or herself, the message of God's forgiving love revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord. The idea of extensiveness in evangelism which many Christians have, especially in the home lands from which we come, is largely bound up with this somewhat limited conception of the scope of the Christian Gospel; and thus it comes to pass, as a matter of natural consequence, that the rapidity with which the goal can be reached becomes to many the chief object of their concern, as individual salvation seems to them the only matter of urgency.

To others, basing their position, as I think, and shall endeavour to show, on a truer apprehension of the teaching of our Lord Himself and of His apostles, the evangelistic enterprise covers a much larger ground than that which I have just spoken of, including everything that, as we gather from a careful study of the New Testament, was comprised in our Lord's own conception of a "Kingdom of Heaven"—a city of God, which, at a later period, St. John in vision saw gradually coming down from God out of heaven to be set up on earth, a city in which men would not only be saved as individuals from a wrath to come, but would be built up into a new, elect, holy, self-surrendered and world-wide society.

This society we must think of as existing even now, to exhibit in deed and life, and manifestly before the world, the embodied mind and spirit of the Lord Himself. Its mission is even now to carry on, through vital union with Christ its risen and glorified Head, a

manifold service on behalf of the whole human family parallel to the ministry of sacrifice, compassion, healing, instruction in the ways and works of God—all, in short, that constitutes the inexhaustible fulness of God's salvation—which the Lord Himself had exercised in the days of His earthly life. Only there is this difference—that while the mission of the Church has ever since the Lord's resurrection and ascension been universal in its range and lasting as the history of the world, our Lord's own ministry was deliberately confined to a single race, was adapted to the prevailing conditions of one particular age of the world, and was carried on for only the short period of a few years within the narrow geographical limits of only one very small—though typical, country. (Cf. St. John xiv. 12, xx. 21-23; Eph. i. 22, 23; Col. i. 24, etc.).

What the future would hold in store for the disciples and for the Church of God to accomplish in the power of Christ could not at that time have been either imagined or understood if it had been declared. It was to the apostles as representatives of that Church in the presence of an age-long mission then just dawning on the world, and not to the apostles merely as eleven individuals who stood before Him at the time, that Christ said: "As My Father hath sent Me so send I you," and again, "Ye shall be My witnesses unto the uttermost part of the earth," and once more, "Lo I am with you alway—not as long as each one of you lives, but, even unto the end of the world." The full meaning of such words and of all they wrap up within them of promise, opportunity and duty in the future is to this day only most dimly discerned by the majority of Christians.

For doing that "work of an evangelist" which in various departments of the manifold ministry of His Church that God has called us to do, some as itinerant preachers, some in more directly pastoral work, others in teaching the young, others in healing the sick, others in the preparation and circulation of Christian

literature—and all these alike are equally functions of the New Testament evangelistic programme expressed in modern speech—there is in truth only one way that can be truly successful, viz., that of following closely along that way of God which once for all has been marked out for the Church as a whole, and for each disciple individually, by the incarnation, the ministry, teaching, example, cross and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. He Himself is the only Way, as He is also the only Truth and the only Life.

The way along which the disciples had to walk when the Lord's visible presence was withdrawn from them, was exactly the same way as that along which He had led them as He Himself walked among them and with them, at the head of their company, from the time that He first chose and called them, that they might be with Him and learn from watching His methods what were the essential principles to be observed in the establishment of His kingdom on earth. It was the way of absolute obedience to the will of God, absolute sacrifice of self even to the death, absolute trust in right principles of action and absolute distrust of all mere shrewdness and worldly policy.

Further, they were to learn from observing truth as it is in Jesus—that the truth everywhere and in regard to everything is and must be a matter of profound and deeply religious interest to everyone who sees in Jesus of Nazareth not only a prophet of God preaching to a sinful world repentance and judgment to come, but the everlasting Word by Whom in the beginning, as St. John says, all things were made, and by Whom to this day all things, as St. Paul says, consist or are sustained. It has often been a matter of amazement to me that so many people who regard themselves as being evangelical in belief, have so little religious interest in the works of God, and see so little sacredness in anything outside of the Bible and in anything outside of the immediate conversion and future

salvation of the people about them. Yet the earth is the fulness of God's glory, and the world of Science and of Nature, so our Christian Gospel teaches us, are both of them dominions over which Christ reigns, Christ "in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

It is a poor thing when Christian missionaries speak disparagingly of learning, and most of all, when, living in a country like China, where for centuries learning and knowledge have been so highly esteemed and so earnestly sought after, people professing to be Christians actually seem to think it evidence of a superior kind of piety to make light of education and of knowledge, and to speak as if it would be better for missionaries never to "waste their time," as they say, in being mere schoolmasters, *i.e.* in devoting their lives to guiding young men and women through a thorough and consecrated education into a Christian view of God's world, God's wonders in the works of His hands, God's providence in the ordering of a nation's history and the magnificence of the whole reign of law. It will be an evil day for the Church in China, if young men and maidens coming out from Government schools, where they have been taught in all departments of knowledge by anti-Christian teachers, find that the leading Chinese representatives of the Christian Church, with whom they come in contact in our chapels, know nothing and care nothing about the Book of Nature, or about the laws of this wonderful universe.

The times of that ignorance and indifference, once so common among Christians in the West, to any knowledge of God and of His works, save what comes from the Scriptures (which were not written for the purpose of saving men the necessity of looking for knowledge elsewhere), those times, I say, are now past; and if the Christ of knowledge, and His ways not only as the Redeemer, but also as the One through Whose mediation all things consist, had no place

in our evangelistic outlook, the evangelism which we think ought to be sufficient for those to whom we are sent, will be one that puts Christ on a very much lower level than He holds in the Scriptures, and in His own teaching.

But I would pass now to another aspect of the method of Christ. People sometimes dwell on the fact that our Lord's disciples were all men in humble positions, and again and again I have heard this fact quoted as a justification for multiplying almost indefinitely uninstructed and undisciplined preachers as teachers, as if for preaching the Gospel almost anybody who is regarded as a Christian would be better than nobody. Have you ever thought what a wonderful education consorting with Christ for three years must have been for each one of the chosen disciples? I sometimes wonder if any other students in the same time ever received anything like the same mental discipline and the same intellectual quickening, to say nothing of spiritual vision and general uplift of their human powers, as these men received! Again and again we read, not with regard to the teaching of Christ only but in regard to His actions, that bystanders were "beyond measure astonished, saying, He hath done all things well, He maketh even the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak." But while such words are generally taken in connexion with those works of our Lord that we call "supernatural"—it is perhaps from works that we are not apt to pay much attention to, works done by Christ that we think of as mere common-place, that His disciples learnt what they would never have learned from any miracles however marvellous. This was one of the results of His plan in choosing His disciples, that they might be with Him to catch the spirit of His life, and perceive, not as the result of special teaching on the subject, but in the course of daily and glad subjection to His personal influence, the unuttered thoughts that were continually impelling Him to do the things He did.

Take two or three illustrations of our Lord's works that were His witness to the Father Who sent Him. Consider for a moment the case of healing a leper recorded in St. Matt. viii. From what part of that incident must we suppose that the disciples learned most as a lesson designed to touch their consciences and to mould their own future conduct and their conception of the moral grandeur of the Lord's character? Was it from the miraculous element in the leper's cure, or was it from seeing one Whose own purity and sanctity had already so deeply impressed them, making absolutely nothing of the ceremonial defilement of touching a leper, of which the orthodox Jew of that time thought so much, and should actually put His hand lovingly like a brother on the leper's shoulder, or gently "take hold of" him as the original says—with that loving touch which so often conveys an expression of sympathy precious to the person who receives it beyond what words can tell?

Then think of the new status, if one may so say, that the Lord gave to children by a purely non-miraculous action. The disciples, as we read in St. Mark x. 13, full of the popular idea that a touch applied to a helpless infant cannot do much good anyhow, and that children who had not yet come to years of intelligence would be none the better for interrupting the preaching of Christ to adults, these disciples saw some ignorant, troublesome mothers who had brought their babies along just that Christ might touch them, and judging of the matter by their own thoughts, not by His, these disciples were for sending the mothers off. And then they saw what they no doubt would never have wished to see again, viz., how the Lord could look when moved with holy indignation, and they heard His stern rebuke, "Suffer the little children to come unto Me . . . Of such is the Kingdom of God," and then taking up the babies one by one in His arms—not now the arms of an angry man, but in the everlasting arms of the Divine compassion

for all His children, even the smallest and the most unconscious—He blessed them, laying His hands upon them—not merely giving a hasty and perfunctory touch that would probably quite have satisfied the mothers, but a touch which has taught millions since then how to handle a little child not their own.

What has all this to do with our theme this morning? Very much I think. Are works such as I have been describing an "intensive" or an "extensive" "method of evangelism," and how does this kind of "evangelism" compare with much in our extensive and ever extending missionary propaganda? Let me call attention to a few of the facts that I have noted in our zealous efforts to extend the Gospel to every creature.

We cannot now go back on history or undo all the wicked things that have been done in the past, or act as if they had not been done. But is it not an appalling circumstance that the treaty rights by which missionaries of all kinds, Protestant and Roman Catholics, are permitted to reside and purchase property in all parts of China—a right not granted to merchants—were the outcome of a deliberate fraud of a missionary smuggling into a French treaty a clause giving this right which the Chinese had no intention of giving, but were afterwards committed to carry out?

Are there not to-day numbers of stations that have been opened in the country for evangelization only by reason of the shrewdness of a missionary outwitting the Chinese, or in some other way taking a forcible advantage of a reluctant people to bring the mission among them?

Again, what of the men sent out by us? Years ago a young missionary called upon me to ask my advice. "I want you to advise me as to the best way of getting out the largest possible number of workers in the shortest possible time." I replied, "I am afraid I so

entirely disbelieve in your plan that I cannot make any suggestion on the subject."

Who that had studied the methods of Christ would have thought that worthy representatives of His Gospel, with all its perpetual call for sacrifice, self-surrender and thoughtful knowledge, could be turned out as fast as there was money to pay them their wages and to rent or build chapels for them to occupy?

The extensive influence we want is only to be found as flowing in a perennial stream of life from a holy and Christ-like church. I will not multiply examples of what evil influences flow from methods alien to all Christ's own example and spirit, and the time forbids me at this hour to illustrate the more pleasant side of our great and blessed missionary enterprise by speaking of instances where Christ-like men, some of whom are present in our midst to-day, have gone out to suffer, to endure, to bless, to teach, to heal, to save their countrymen in China in the spirit and along the lines of Christ's own mission.

For such workers and for all their extensive endeavours and methods we render praise to God and know that they are doing much to hasten the kingdom of His Son, but for others whom I have known of a different class of workers—and there are many of them in China—I regard them and all their works as amongst the greatest obstacles that the Kingdom of God has to face. Knowing nothing of Christ's intensity of salvation, they can never do anything to represent any true method of extensiveness.

CHAPTER NINE

THE PRINCELY MAN

IN considering what the sages of China have said concerning their ideal of human virtue and excellence, it is only right that we should remember that their ideal is naturally somewhat coloured by the opinions and customs of the age and country in which they lived. That the ideal man of Confucianism falls far short of the Christian standard of perfection is unquestionable, but at the same time most persons will be ready freely to admit that in the "princely" character described in the sacred writings of China, the Chinese have before their minds an ideal which has not often been surpassed.

Confucius expressly disclaimed all right to be considered a *kiun-tsz*, or "ideal man," himself. In as far as he has described the character of such a person, he has described a standard by which he was endeavouring to mould his life, rather than a standard which he felt he had actually reached. The quotations given in the following pages, in illustration of the character of the *kiun-tsz* as he is described in the Chinese classics, are not all from the lips of Confucius himself. Some of them were uttered by his immediate followers, some by the famous philosopher Mencius, who flourished B.C. 371-288, about a hundred years after the death of Confucius.

The Confucian Ideal.

There is a short but characteristic sentence attributed to Confucius which expresses concisely the manifoldness of the ideal which he had before his mind in all that he said about the *kiun-tsz*. This

sentence, translated boldly and literally as Dr. Legge translates it, sounds to European ears almost ludicrous. "The *kiun-tsz* is not an utensil," but interpreted as these words are by Chinese commentators—and probably their interpretation is quite right—the sentence is to be understood as meaning that the ideal man is one who is equal to every emergency. Every utensil has a special use of its own, and is fit for nothing else. Not so the ideal man. You cannot take him at unawares, or find any task to which he is not equal. A somewhat similar thought is expressed elsewhere in slightly different language. "The *kiun-tsz* can find himself in no situation in which he is not himself." "He does what is proper to the station in which he is : he does not desire to go beyond this. In a position of wealth and honour, he does what is proper to a position of wealth and honour. In a poor and low position, he does what is proper to a poor and low position. Situated among barbarous tribes, he does what is proper to a situation amongst barbarous tribes. In a position of sorrow and difficulty, he does what is proper to a position of sorrow and difficulty."* But the superiority of the *kiun-tsz* to ordinary men does not rest on any supernatural gifts or endowments which he possesses and they do not. He is not a being endowed with miraculous powers over Nature, neither is he one possessed of second sight. His wisdom is not of such a character as to preclude all possibility of his ever being deceived or mistaken. All that is claimed for him in this respect is that he will not err in regard to right and wrong. He may be misled as to matters of fact, but not as to matters of principle. Mencius illustrates this point by an anecdote. "Some one sent a present of a live fish to Tsz-ch'an of Ch'ing. Tsz-ch'an ordered his pond-keeper to keep it in the pond, but that officer cooked it

* Compare the words of St. Paul (Phil. iv. 11-13), where the apostle claims to possess these identical characteristics of the "ideal man," but simply in virtue of his union with Christ.

and reported the execution of this commission, saying, 'When I first let it go it appeared embarrassed. In a little while it seemed to be somewhat at ease, and then swam away joyfully.' Tsz-ch'an observed, 'It had got into its element!' The pond-keeper went out and said, 'Who calls Tsz-ch'an a wise man?' After I had cooked and eaten the fish, he says 'It had got into its element!'" Mencius adds, "The *kiun-tsz* may be imposed on by what seems to be as it ought to be, but he cannot be entrapped by what is contrary to right principle." The ideal man, however, is not one who can be easily deceived. Although chiefly conspicuous for his moral superiority, his integrity and uprightness of life and conduct, he is, as we shall see, by no means wanting in shrewdness and general intelligence. "He does not anticipate attempts to deceive him, nor think beforehand of his not being believed, and yet he apprehends these things readily when they occur."

But the cultivation of character, and the proper discipline of his thoughts and affections, are the chief objects of solicitude to the *kiun-tsz*. Confucius always recognized the supreme importance of watchfulness over the secret thoughts and intents of the heart. Summarizing in the sentence the general drift and teaching of one of the most ancient of the sacred books of China, he says: "In the Book of Poetry are three hundred pieces, but the design of them all may be embraced in one sentence. Have no depraved thoughts." Chinese moralists have always laid great stress on the fact that the virtues of the truly good man are not incidental or occasional, but are the natural and spontaneous outcome of a hidden life within. With them, not less than with ourselves, morality is held to consist in habits, not in isolated actions. The sage or holy man of the Chinese is one "who naturally and easily follows the right way." "Without effort he hits what is right." So clear is his intellect that he even

“apprehends without thought.” All this is the result of his perfect sincerity and singleness of aim.

The Virtue of Hui.

We have seen that the *kiun-tsz* of Confucianism is an ideal and not an historical personage. But although Confucius had never met with any one who in all points answered to his ideal of life,* he nevertheless frequently adduces the examples of the sages of antiquity, or even of some of his own contemporaries, as illustrating, in some measure at least, the character on which he delighted to dwell. Thus we have the example of one called Hui mentioned as an instance of contentment and resignation in the midst of poverty. “Admirable indeed was the virtue of Hui! With a single bamboo dish of rice, a single gourd dish of drink, and living in a mean, narrow lane, while others could not have endured the distress, he did not allow his joy to be affected by it. Admirable indeed was the virtue of Hui!” “Such was Hui,” said Confucius on another occasion, “that for three months there was nothing in his mind contrary to perfect virtue. Others may attain to this on some days or in some months, but nothing more.” Hui was a favourite disciple of the sage, but, to his master’s great distress, he died at an early age. But Confucius’ most unqualified praise was reserved for the examples of perfect virtue afforded by the ancient, semi-mythical emperors, Yaou and Shun—men whose names are still held in the highest possible veneration in China, on account of the wisdom and righteousness which are said to have characterized their reigns. A disciple of Confucius named Tsz-loo asked on one occasion what constituted the ideal man. “The master said, ‘The cultivation of

* Confucius said, “A sage (Shing jên) it is not mine to see; could I see a (or the) *kiun-tsz*, that would satisfy me” (C. A. VII. xxv. 1). Contrast Matt. xiii. 16, 17.

himself in reverential carefulness.' 'And is this all?' asked Tsz-loo. 'He cultivates himself,' was the reply, 'so as to give rest to others.' 'And is this all?' again asked Tsz-loo. The master said, 'He cultivates himself so as to give rest to all the people'; even Yaou and Shun were still solicitous about this." From this and other passages in the Confucian Analects it appears that the goodness of Yaou and Shun, whose examples Confucius held in such high esteem, was not by any means simply a passive goodness.

It may be said that Confucius is not responsible for the folly of those who thought fit to chronicle all these trivialities, but the fact remains that there is a certain stiffness and formality which seems inseparable from the Chinese ideal of perfect virtue, and which Confucius and the other sages of China have sanctioned both by precept and by example, and this tends to lower rather than to raise their ideals in our eyes.

Again, the "small" or "mean" man is wanting in that reverence which always characterizes true greatness. Confucius said, "There are three things of which the *kiun-tsz* stands in awe. He stands in awe of the ordinances of Heaven. He stands in awe of great men. He stands in awe of the words of the sages. The *siao jên** does not know the ordinances of Heaven. He is disrespectful to great men. He makes sport of the words of the sages." The contrast between these two different types of character may be summed up in a single sentence: "The progress of the *kiun-tsz* is upwards, the progress of the *siao jên* is downwards."

Heroism: East and West.

Heroism and a disregard of personal danger in the cause of humanity is happily not confined to one race

* *Siao jên* = the mean or uncouth man.

or to one age, and yet its manifestation differs considerably in different ages and under different conditions. The characteristics of Chinese heroism and perhaps of Oriental heroism generally, is fortitude and endurance, rather than aggressive bravery and resourcefulness, which often displays itself in the heroism of the West. An Anglo-Saxon hero in the position of Lu Yung-yi would have been apt to spring as a lion on the assailant of his chief, willing to perish in the attempt to overwhelm him, and it is not unlikely that by such means he would have succeeded without actually dying. The history of heroes who have won the Victoria Cross would, we think, be far oftener found associated with deeds of daring, than with mere fortitude and willingness to die in a position from which there was no escape save by the road of cowardice. Yet the true heroism is that which, regardless of all thought of self, is content to lay down life for another or in a great cause as witness to some great truth. The noble army of martyrs in the West has had its examples both of fortitude and also of daring bravery, but a great difference lies between the heroism which Chinese public opinion admires and that which Christian civilization recognizes. Many a man in China has received posthumous honours for taking his own life by way of emphasizing his protest against some public scandal in high places, or by way of avoiding the disgrace of defeat in battle. The highest morality of the West has always drawn a sharp line of demarcation between "taking" one's life and "laying down" one's life in a good cause. The former it deprecates on the ground that suicide is the refuge, either of the coward or of the despairing. Despair can never be a Christian virtue, and the man who dies as a pessimist by his own hand, can never influence others as an optimist can do, who dares others to kill him in his witness to the truth. Suicide rightly looked at is wrong through and through. It brings even the hero, who means well, into the most

undesirable society of criminals who take poison in preference to being hanged, or who shoot themselves instead of being condemned to penal servitude for fraud. The laying down of life is another matter. "I like life," said Mencius, "and I like righteousness ; if I cannot have both I will let life go and hold on to righteousness." The man who has a message of protest to deliver against some public evil, and having delivered its wallows opium, condemns himself as one who has no faith in the power of truth to which he witnesses, but only in the probable consequences of fright that he will give to the person he condemns.

CHAPTER TEN

A FURLOUGH MESSAGE

*The Missionary Appeal.**

BUT people sometimes say: "Well, I suppose you meet a good many people who are living up to the light they have?" A wonderful question that! A missionary often hears it. I will answer it by asking another. How many people here in England, outside the various churches, are living up to the light they have? How many people in the slums of London, how many people among the middle classes who never enter a place of worship, how many of the upper ten thousand who are living in worldliness and sin, how many do you meet with who are living up to the light they have? I might say, taking the nation all round, how many people do you find who are living up to the light they have? I was taught when a child—and I believe I was taught rightly—that "we have all sinned, and come short of the glory of God"; that "there is none that doeth righteousness—no, not one." That is what I was taught as a matter of theory, and that is what I believe, and that is what I think, after observing life in China and in England also; people do not live up to the light they have. And if in a country like this, where consciences have been educated by Christian influence and teaching, we find people coming short, is it reasonable to suppose that in a land where the conscience is uneducated people will rise nearer to their own ideal of what is

* From a speech delivered in England.

right? Surely it is a true principle that the more enlightened a conscience is the more quickened it is likely to become, and the more ready to answer to its own dictates. And, on the other hand, the darker the conscience becomes, the more dead it is, the more unresponsive it is even to the light it has.

I have spoken at some length of the immorality of the Chinese; let me now speak of the morality of the Chinese at their best. There is a man, who has been my teacher in Hankow, whom I respect as much as any heathen Chinaman I know; he is a typical instance of a good Chinaman. And what is he? I do not think I can describe him better than by saying that he is a good sort of Pharisee without the worship of God. He is very well content with himself, but, as far as I can see, he has no hunger or thirst after righteousness for himself, or for others; he is satisfied with what he has, and satisfied to think that he is a good deal better than most of his neighbours. And in that I dare say he is right. There is no going out of his conscience after something higher and better than what he has already attained. His mind seems, at best, to be fixed on the present world. Now, this idea of life can never satisfy those who have known what Christ's ideal of life is.

I want just to appeal to you, as ministers, to ask you whether you have done in the past what you ought to have done for the missionary cause. I am persuaded that our churches might do a great deal more than they are doing. If we came to look at these things as God looks at them, our position in regard to missionary work at home and abroad would be very different from what it is. I am not one who grudges all the money spent on building fine churches. There may come a time when we can afford to build fine churches, because the whole world will be evangelized, but it is a sad thing when a congregation is absorbed with the idea of getting up a steeple, or buying a new organ, while the masses are lying without

the knowledge of God and of Christ. We owe something, no doubt, to the Church in regard to culture, art, music, and so on; but we owe immensely more to God in the way of trying to seek and save those for whom Christ died. . . . We hear many all over the country bemoaning the dead state of the churches. Let them come forth with a new zeal for conquering the world for Christ, and the influence of that missionary zeal will react upon themselves, and they will rise in their own life to a higher standard than they have yet reached. It was said to me the other day by a friend, as I came from a missionary meeting: "Ah! these are the best sort of revivals: these meetings lift people up out of themselves, and out of thoughts about their own religious concerns, and occupy their minds with the idea of the evangelization of the world!" We may well be anxious for the evangelization of our own country; but let us remember that the commission given to us is nothing less than this—that we should be for a light to the Gentiles and to carry God's salvation to the ends of the earth.

Amidst all the difficulties and complications that are now sometimes so oppressively felt as existing in the missionary situation in China, one thing is perfectly certain—that the missionary motive, the missionary hope, as well as the need for missionary enterprise, was never more necessary than it is now. But as the conflict between Christianity and heathenism goes on it becomes more and more apparent that he who would take any real part in it must give himself for it, spend himself upon it. Acquiring the language only sufficiently to use it, *i.e.* to say what one wants to say, but not sufficiently to enter sympathetically into the thoughts and difficulties of the people, preaching to crowds, but never drawing near to the individual soul, healing the sick without any personal touch; these and similar things are like exploiting for surface coal or minerals, esteeming it too much or unnecessary

trouble to use mining apparatus. We are sometimes like quack doctors, treating complicated or dangerous diseases up to our light, when we should be trained, skilful students, who have followed Christ long and carefully and have learnt His methods of saving.

The Bible in China.

St. Paul in one place, answering the question raised by himself, "What advantage hath the Jew?" replies very rightly, "*Much every way*," but he goes on, "first of all that they were entrusted with the oracles of God." Who can estimate what "the living oracles," as St. Stephen speaks (Acts. vii. 38), have been in the history of the spread of the Gospel? Few things fill me with more apprehension as to the future of missions than to meet with missionaries, who, themselves being no students or lovers of Scriptures, are found to talk of the sacred books of India or China as if these were to be for the Church in India or in China the introduction to the New Testament? Who that has himself ever felt the power of the prophetic office as developed in Israel, not to speak now of the Law as given through Moses, can imagine that any other books, compiled in any age or country of the world, can take the place of the Jewish Scriptures in awakening the sense of sin, or in introducing men either to the rudiments, or to the heights and depths of the revelation of God given to the world in Jesus the Messiah? Well said the late Dr. Hort (on 1. Peter i. 12): "The dream of a Christianity without Judaism soon arose . . . but it was in effect an abnegation of apostolic Christianity. When robbed of His Messiahship, our Lord became an isolated portent and the true meaning of faith in Him was lost. This was one of the most fundamental subjects of controversy in the second century, and with good reason the watchword of the champions of apostolic teaching was the harmony of prophets with apostles."

Missions have a special function in modern China to impress on the Chinese the necessity of studying the Divine Library of the Scriptures. Recent events have greatly lessened the deference hitherto paid in China to the Confucian literature, and a new future is before the Bible.

Church Life.

Can we in these days afford to part with this thought of the Christian Church as an elect body, or can we afford to merge our Christian brotherhood or discipleship in merely national or racial affinities? In the lands from which we come, we hear more and more of the loss to the religious life of those countries arising from the decay of the ideal of Church fellowship. I am not thinking now of that particular form of ecclesiastical narrowness and partisanship which, everywhere and in almost every sect large or small, vaunts itself under the name of "churchmanship," but I am thinking of what fifty years ago Church life was, as I knew it, in the Christian Society in which I was brought up, as compared with what I have seen and heard in England in the same society on the occasion of more recent visits. The kind of Church life which was at one time so prominent, at all events amongst Christians of the Presbyterian, Congregational, or Methodist type, seems in many places to have been now displaced by a sort of general religiousness among individuals which contents itself with more or less habitual or occasional churchgoing. This has become largely dissociated from the striving after spiritual fellowship and of recognized union in Christ with others. There is nothing that China, or the Church in China, needs to-day more than true Church life—the life in which members are joined together in a consecrated society for purposes of mutual edification, and for corporate witness-bearing as towards an outside "world." On this, very much

depends for the maintenance and the spread of healthy Christian family life in China. To testify to these things, and to make them living realities in modern Chinese life is surely another special function of Missions.

I confess I look with blank dismay on some of the later developments I have seen in China of the spirit of Church organization among the churches with which I am acquainted, and my mind goes back to days when with far less fussiness, far less thought about "control"—Chinese or foreign,—far fewer special officers and special functions for collecting money and investing it, there seemed to me far more real concern for the salvation of souls and for developing the true inner organic and corporate life of the Church, than I see to-day. I do not for a moment think that the Church in those earlier days was without its dangers. I know well it was not, but in the matter of developing an inner life, and as *esprit de corps* specially becoming saints, as against the matter of designing and stereotyping an outward shape for the body to assume, I doubt if we have made much progress, if any.

Mission Schools.

Primary Schools efficiently taught by trained Chinese teachers, and in the Chinese language, and under the supervision—for the present—of trained teachers from Europe and America, will be a tremendous force in uplifting not only the pupils, but the homes from which they go out and return.

John Knox, in his system of education for Scotland, attached great value to the day school (as against the Boarding School) for the above end. Bright children, being interestingly taught, and with their own minds daily expanding under such influence, then returning to the home and repeating the lessons (*i.e.* the thoughts and ideas) they had learned in school, tend to quicken the intelligence of parents and

relatives. Even where Boarding Schools are regarded as the ideal, sometimes the cost is prohibitive. In such cases the opportunities opened by the day school will be seen to have a value of their own.

The primary schools should lead to the Secondary. To this only a small proportion of the pupils would attain, the majority having early to earn their bread. The teaching in the Secondary to be of the best. Quality, not quantity or number, of such Mission Schools the really important thing. From these some of the pupils will pass to Colleges where there is more or less of specialization. Others will pass into business life, capable of taking a place and wielding an influence in Chinese Society of a kind not common now.

It is not desirable to segregate the Christian boys. In the majority of cases the "Christianity" of such is hereditary; as a living force in the scholars' life, it must be won. Many nominally Christian boys are not equal in earnestness of purpose and moral fibre to some of their non-Christian fellow pupils, who in a Christian atmosphere and under Christian teaching and the personality of the Christian school-master early develop a personal loyalty to Christian ideals and to Christ, that is a real force and influence in a school.

I stand in doubt of offering education as a means of attracting non-Christians within the sphere of Christian influence. Whether we can influence the youth of China in a distinctively Christian sense or not, the Church is bound in witnessing to Him "in Whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden" to impart sound knowledge to the full extent of her power, believing that "as we come to know anything better, we come to know Christ better." As I am not in sympathy with the plan of offering famine relief, in times of famine, either to Christians only, or to non-Christians merely as a means of attracting them within the sphere of Christian

influence, but only because the famine-stricken people are suffering sons of men, and because I, as a Christian, feel the compassion of the Son of Man for them, so I apply this principle boldly to education, and think the failure to do this has weakened our testimony to the width of Christ's sympathy and Christ's methods of dealing with men, and has also led to the result of getting a larger number of feeble people about us than a bolder policy would have attracted.

Weakness and Strength.

It often seems as if our position was one allied on the one hand to infinite power, and on the other to incurable weakness. On the one hand God our Maker, our Upholder, our Redeemer; on the other hand self, earthly, carnal, diseased, perplexed, bound by a thousand cords to the seen and temporal,—almost beyond hope of being otherwise. But Christianity will not descend to this level. It will not give us any encouragement in the line of hopelessness, nor will it allow that human impotence and feebleness is more potent than the omnipotence and might of God. Try and frame a sentence the converse of the above, and it at once becomes apparent how utterly it is a denial of the Christian position. We dare not exalt even our known and realized weakness into a position of equal potency with the almightiness of God, nor treat our own existence as being more real than the existence of God.

SECTION II—ON THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

CHAPTER ELEVEN

UPON THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH

The Corporate Character of the Gospel.

THE more the Gospel is understood, the more its corporate character is seen to be of its very essence. It is a Gospel for humanity, not merely for human beings as so many separate entities. We sorely need an enlargement of heart and also of mind, to enable us to realize the greatness of our Christian hope. So long as our aspirations and our expectations in regard to the Heavenly Word and eternal salvation are circumscribed and centred in any sense in self, so long must our thoughts both of God and of the Will of God be narrow and inadequate.

No one can thoroughly face the idea of identifying himself entirely with the Church, and regarding its perfections and efficiency as being as sacred and as near to his heart as his own individual perfecting and efficiency, without at once getting a new view of cross-bearing and of self-surrender to Christ. It is bad enough, so one reasons, to be responsible for all one's follies and sins, and neglect of opportunity and wrong-headedness—but to think of quietly taking on one's self responsibility for others' failings too—who can face it? It is quite enough to have to attend to one's own affairs, without continually having to be thinking how others are to be helped to more

efficiency in their life of service. And then, the friction involved by close contact with any but one's own self-chosen friends ! How much easier and more pleasant isolation and detachment are, except when one can do some manifestly gracious thing ! All such views of our calling in Christ and of our place in the Body have only to be formulated to show their poverty of conception. We are not to accept blindly the doings of others, any more than a true servant rests satisfied with his own doings. Herein lies a part of the Cross entrusted to us to be faithful to what God gives us to see, and not merely accommodating to our brethren's wishes and methods. Who is sufficient for these things ?

There is, or ought to be, boundless comfort, hope, strength and inspiration in the thought of a universal kingdom of God. So long as our thoughts are concentrated on self, even self in its highest aspects, its noblest ambitions, its eternal welfare, there is necessarily a limiting of our hope. We are creatures of time and our destiny is eternity ; we are individuals and we cannot altogether get away from our individuality, but we are also members of a race, and of a social order, and our destiny is membership in a body, of which Christ is the life, and Christ is the Head. How little any single individual can know ! How little any single individual can do ! How dependent on others we are for the development of love, that highest endowment of human nature ! Where should we all be, if we could not fall back on the knowledge which others possess ! Where should we be if we could not fall back on the ability of others to do things that we have neither the skill nor the strength to accomplish ? Where should we be if our highest aspirations were limited to thoughts springing up in our own hearts and minds ? Men are said to go mad in solitary confinement, *i.e.* when shut up entirely to themselves. But when we look around on the world as we know it, we cannot but feel dissatisfied with the

best that others have to offer us in this human fellowship of man with his fellow man. Our hearts cry out for something better, for a knowledge that man does not possess, for a power which is beyond the power of man, for a goodness that exceeds that of the people we know, for a love that is wiser, more comprehensive and unquenchable than that of the most genial, loving, sympathetic and kind—of any persons we have ever met; for a moral excellence which is more perfect and that has a wider outlook than anybody we are acquainted with can exhibit.

The Kingdom of God is open to all believers, yet not to all who may be induced to *say* they believe or, even, to *think* they do. Belief has different degrees of intensity and different degrees of reasonableness. We must, in dealing with the highest things, know in Whom we have believed. We trust in a living God.

As we lower our standard of the necessary character of the Christian Church in its first days in a heathen country, so we shall inevitably lower our standard of what is required from ourselves as ministers of the Gospel of Christ in the way of concern for the salvation of men and as pastors in a church of a living God. We consent to the appointment of unspiritual men as preachers and evangelists, and we must inevitably sink to the level which that kind of "evangelism" leads to.

Symbolism.

I saw to-day the deep religious significance of symbolism and the immeasurable loss to our apprehension of the truth that arises from neglect of it, and still more from decrying its use. The creation of imaginary symbolism, which has no power to speak to the conscience or to the understanding, is one thing. The spiritual interpretation of symbolism, with which God has everywhere surrounded us, is another.

There is a very great danger of symbolism coming back to the Church on the wrong lines—a love of

the beautiful and of the æsthetic for its own sake, and because it appeals to certain natural instincts in man ; not as interpretation of spiritual things and as revealing to the mind and soul, through the senses, mysteries of God's love and of His will.

If we can think of the martyrs as rejoicing to have entered into the fellowship of Christ's death and sacrifice, may we not see even the slaughtered animals of the Old Testament in a somewhat similar light ? If we could think of them, looking back at the end of the Old Testament dispensation, as having been an unceasing stream of witnesses to the Atonement of the Son of God, yet to be revealed, would they not be filled with content and even joy ?

Neglect of Theology.

It is not uncommon nowadays to hear people say " Men don't want theology " ; unfortunately, they do not, any more than the vast majority of the Chinese want a science of medicine or of surgery. All the majority of the Chinese want is to keep well, or to get well, if they are not ; and for that they have a number of what they regard as simple remedies.

There are not wanting among us signs of a great backward movement in the Church from the Christ, to a mild and inoperative Christian deism, from which the world of the eighteenth century was aroused by the great evangelical revival. That revival may be imitated; but it can never be repeated ; and if it could, it would not produce the same results now as it did then. But there has to come a greater, truer, a deeper and more far-seeing revival of religion in a revived faith in Jesus as the Christ of God, God manifest in the flesh, the Lamb in the midst of the throne.

And with it must come a new apprehension amongst Christian people of what St. Paul meant when he said, " I determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and Him Crucified." Nothing at the

base of all my teaching on any subject, nothing in my own private ambitions, nothing in the ordering of my life, or in my endeavours for the salvation of men.

The True Unity of the Church.

I saw this morning, as never before, the Church of God as one,—pre-Christian and post-Christian, answering to Him Who is and was and Who cometh. The vision of the twenty-four elders, the promise of our Lord in Matt. viii. 11 ; the word in Heb. xii. 23 ; the whole series of illustrations of the faith in which God delights, Heb. xi. 2 ; xii. 2 ; Jesus the Author, Captain of faith, whether under the Old Testament or the New Testament. Newman has a fine sermon on this subject ; it seems, however, to contain fallacies which involve clinging to usages connected with the temple, which surely God intended to pass away. The synagogue was the centre of the new worship, the New Jerusalem the ideal of the Christian Church. Every true vision of the Church will be accompanied with a clearer, more rapturous vision of the Lord Jesus—the jasper and the crystal and the pure gold like to transparent glass are nothing, except as showing forth the glory of the light which shines through them ; and more intense realization of the value of the individual soul, both the saved and the unsaved, and of our own place in the kingdom as priests.

The conviction deepens in my mind that one of the greatest perils of the Kingdom of God in the present day arises from the growing demand for unity among Christians. The peril arises or manifests itself in different directions :

(1.) In the silent subordination, often unconscious, on the part of those most persistent in dwelling on this demand, of Truth to unity.

(2.) In the unconscious ignoring by many of our Lord's definitions of the unity for which He prayed : " That they may all be one, as Thou Father

art in Me, and I in Thee, that they may also be one in us, that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me." How very often we hear this verse quoted, omitting entirely the one essential condition of our Lord's own ideal of unity.

(3.) We are watching now, especially in the mission fields, efforts being made in all directions as steps towards unity, so we are told, processes which are essentially mechanical and far oftener than not bearing in them evil seeds of variance and dissension, which will never attend, sooner or later, combinations of workers even in religious causes, when the one abiding unity of spirit, as the Father in the Son and the Son in the Father, is lacking.

The unity of the Church, rightly conceived of, is essential to Christianity; but it can only be brought about by a deepened individual life and an intensified spirit of individual responsibility. In corporate life, except the very highest, there is always a tendency to lose the sense of responsibility, and for people as members of a corporation to assent to things which as private individuals they would not assent to. The ideal of Christian unity is found in Eph. iv., 12-13, when St. Paul exhorts the Corinthians all to speak the same thing, that there be no divisions among them. The same thing he is thinking of is not necessarily the thing the majority say, but the thing that is true; the thing that recognizes the supreme headship of Christ, and that is the expression of His Will. To stand by decisions of the Church while one's own conscience sides with others, not of your church, in regarding it as not true or according to the mind of Christ, is not to advance, but to hinder Christian unity, the unity which is with the Father and with the Son.

The Fulness of Salvation.

We see a world ruined by sin; an enemy hath done this. But the call to every Christian is to rise

above that, to see a world that is created as a manifestation of God's goodness and wisdom, though man has marred it. Some people have come to think so much of a gospel for the unsaved, that they fail to realize the grandeur of the gospel for the saved. We cannot think too much of the former ; we may easily, however, think too little of the latter. There are two questions—first—"What shall I do to be saved ?" and secondly, not less important, "Being saved what shall I do ?" Where that question is not asked we may suspect the existence of a very poor conception of salvation, and a very precarious hold on it. The answer to the latter question is inexhaustible. But one thing is impressed upon us by Isaiah's message. This world with its fulness all speaks of God and His purposes. All life is sacred, every occupation in life that a Christian is called to is sacred. We should rejoice in God's providence and rejoice in God's works. The old men are to dream dreams. What dreams of better things to come are your elderly people dreaming ? How much do your thoughts dwell on the new Heaven and the new earth ? The young men and maidens are to see visions. What visions are you looking upon ? What is open to you ? The deliberate choice of a life of unselfish service, but more, an intelligent life, versus a life of mere fun and excitement and change, the study of God's works. Make one department your own, with the avowed intention of seeing God's glory in it, and you will find it become radiant with interest and life. The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein. Find here your recreation and here new themes of praise to the glory of God. Think what wonders the past fifty years have unveiled.

CHAPTER TWELVE

UPON THE SCRIPTURES

THE more one studies Scripture in a reverential spirit and in the spirit of humble expectation, the more one finds in it hidden harmonies, and soul-stirring correspondences which bear their own witness to a Divine origin. Many of these savour, perhaps, of what the superficial Christian delights to call mysticism, and therein lies a part of their witness to their truth. Compare Gen. iii. 24, with Rev. xxii. 14, etc. The Garden and the City; the river going out of Eden and the River of the City of God. I have a horror of a criticism that is always treating the Bible as scientific specialists might have treated the dead body of the Christ, dissecting it to show its exact similarity with the bodies of men of His time. Such scientific men might have gone off into laudations of their method and its results, and shown how they had demonstrated that Jesus was no phantom but verily and indeed human, etc., etc.

Two Ways of Studying the Bible.

There are two ways of studying the Bible. The one is the habit of looking at the Bible as with a microscope; the other is looking through the Bible at the opened heaven as through a telescope. The first method was that of the Scribes and Pharisees of olden times—some of whom were very excellent and well-meaning students of Scripture, though the more they studied the Bible, the more it became to them an attention to minutiae of interpretation, and magnifying of unimportant questions.

The second method was that of the writer of the Apocalypse—and above all of our Lord Himself, who was perpetually showing the fulfilment of the Scriptures on most unexpected matters—a local and limited utterance of the past being a revelation of eternal truths of the Kingdom of God. So also in the interpretation of St. Paul and of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The jots and tittles of the Law magnified in the microscope give no spiritual results. Look through them to the heavens beyond and you will see how even these minutiae live and throb with life as anticipations of a universal law and method of God.

The transition from a non-natural and slavishly literal interpretation of Scripture which is both carnal because of its materialism, and also deceptive because of its apparent superiority to facts and probabilities and to considerations that appeal to reason,—this transition is often a very painful discipline—a discipline during which many make shipwreck of the faith and which in the case of others seems only to issue in love growing cold. But for many more it is the entrance into a larger and more abundant life, a life in which God's ways are seen to be more wonderful and more far-reaching, and thus the extent and character of His dominion is for them enlarged, all nature is transformed and renewed and the eternal and the spiritual is brought more near.

As the course of human history, and especially the history of the chosen people in all its deepest experiences and truest longings, was full of Messianic anticipation,—so that in the experiences and actions of the Lord Jesus it could be constantly said: "The Scripture was fulfilled"—so in another sense the experiences of the Lord Jesus, the Christ, the Son of Man, are an anticipation of what the people, His Church, must pass through, both of suffering, rejection and final resurrection and glory.

I used to think what a loss it was to the Church

that no detailed account has been preserved to us of those discourses of our Lord that are referred to in St. Luke xxiv. 27. I see now it is a great gain. Any true understanding of the Messianic element in the Old Testament must come to the Church as a whole, as a living and glowing vision of truth that adapts itself to the varying standpoints of the ages. A fixed authoritative explanation of the truth can never answer the same end as a vision of truth won by patient and humble study of Scripture.

Our Lord's discourses must have had a wonderfully enlightening effect on the minds of His disciples. He spoke to them as Jews of the Jewish age to which they belonged. Had a verbatim report of all He said come down to us it might, to people who are weighed down by literalism, have suggested grave difficulties of acceptance, coupled with misgivings as to Himself. He gave us instead a living seed. He sent us to the fountain of prophecy—Moses, the prophets and the Psalms.

Notes on Gains in the Study of the Bible.

The law of advance with retrogression can be seen in modern Christianity—even in the last half century. The backward movement is to deadness, indifference, disregard of the Bible and of religion and Sunday observance. But there is an advance also and progress in religious ideals. Less legalism, less hard and unintelligent definitions of the Bible and of Christian truth. Compare the phraseology of fifty years ago—"A state of probation." "Is it possible to make the best of both worlds?" etc. There was a mechanical idea of Bible authority and of Scriptural inspiration. Under that stage of religious development there was a real and deep religious life, but it clung more to the definitions of the past than to the promise of further light coming through the influence of the Holy Spirit in the Church. Even the thoughts of the Kingdom

of Heaven were more centred in the skies than on earth, and in the future rather than in the present. The sufferings of Christ were a punishment for sin rather than a revelation of God's reconciling Gospel.

But now set over against these undeveloped or misconceived interpretations of Scriptures, some of the truths that have most influenced the really religious mind of later times :

(1.) Eternal Life—no longer thought of as a future of unending duration, but as an eternal now. A clock dial without hands.

(2.) Rewards and punishments not arbitrarily inflicted from without, but an essential consequence within. Rom. i. 18, 19, 27. Heb. x. 34.

(3.) An appeal to the authority of the Bible, not really understood, instead of to the light that shines through the Bible, as if Euclid had been thought of as authoritative teaching on geometry to be learnt by heart, and appealed to as a final authority on the subject, instead of Euclid being grasped and its lessons never to be questioned, because seen now as essential and unquestionable truth. The function of the Bible is not to lay down arbitrary principles of religion to be believed without questioning, but as manifesting reasons for belief rooted in the very nature of God, and of man's relation to God, which is of the very essence of things ; and in consequence treating unbelief as resistance to the fundamental principles of the universe.

The Story Unfinished.

Our inheritance in the Bible is a Divine library. In the Heavenly World there may be waiting for us something like a new Bible, an authoritative and Divinely inspired Church History. We cannot look for such a book now. But imagine its value when we get it ! How we shall quote what God did for such and such a person, whose life has greatly influenced

the world since ! And we shall dwell on the very words, to feed on them and to apply them to our needs. Such a book has in God's providence been given to us in the Scriptures up to a point. (1.) The long history of Israel. (2.) The opening days of the Christian Church. And we should pause before promises made to one person and another, and see the help in them to ourselves. As we use the language of the Old Testament for ourselves it gains new meanings. Who has not known Bethels ? " We are come unto Mount Zion." But all are summed up in Christ, summed up, but not to the exclusion of the particular promise or experience.

In reading our Lord's parables, one often feels like a child, who has been fascinated by some short story ; but is not satisfied with it. " Go on," he says, " what happened afterwards ? " But the answer is, " That's all." I think it must have been a part of our Lord's purpose in giving men these short pictures of human life, to stop the story abruptly, in order to make men think—think of the situation into which He has led His hearers. He puts a combination of circumstances into our minds as seed into the ground. And such has often been the way with great teachers in all ages, and it appears to be the way of God. The " ten words " of the Jewish Law were never intended to be a finished code of morals. In their nature and in their abiding importance they were seeds—each one wrapping up great principles, and in this fact lay their power and authority. And what is true of our Lord's parables is true, in a measure, of narratives recorded by the evangelists. What happened after the incident recorded in St. Luke vii. 41-50 ? He said unto the woman, " Thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace." Where was a woman like that to go ? What was she to do to recover her position ? What could she do ? The answer to these questions seems to lie in the word, " Thy faith hath saved thee,"—not quite the same as saying, " faith can save," which

is a more commonly preached and far more feeble gospel. No doubt we cannot look for such faith in every penitent that we may meet, or that may ask us the way of salvation. Not everyone who came to Christ had such faith, *e.g.*, the rich young ruler. It may in some cases be our duty to make the way of repentance simpler and easier, but in so far as we have to do so, or think we have, let us remember that we are also making it less sure, less effective. "Ever by a mighty hope, pressing on and bearing up." If for those words, "By a mighty hope," we substitute the idea of "with a human prop"—so long as the prop lasts, fairly satisfactory results may appear to have been attained, more of a negative character, however, than of a positive, and we shall always feel that we are living and working on a lower level than that which the Gospel presents to us.

The Book of Revelation.

Impressed with the thought that the Revelation as descriptive of the triumph of Christ is a book that ought to be specially consolatory to Christians in this age, especially to those who like myself are tempted to see only the dark side of things, the failure of their own life and the surrounding shallowness and worldliness.

The Apocalypse is a great picture gallery, or it may be compared to an exhibition of dissolving views. Great spiritual conceptions are brought before us as in separate visions, but each one is incomplete in itself. It is supplemented by another. On the other hand, the visions or pictures are by no means related one to the other like the various pieces of a picture puzzle. They cannot by any manipulation be fitted together and made into one consistent whole. Each one suggests a variety of thoughts; but they have to be subsequently compared together, to see how far they are harmonious and supplementary one to the other,

and how far our interpretations of them are misleading and impossible of combination.

The Apocalypse, the unveiling of Jesus Christ which God gave Him to show unto His servants, is one long prolonged appeal to patience, the patient endurance of the mysteries of life, through undoubting faith and confidence in the ways and purposes of God. About His presence are clouds and darkness, through which the eye of sense cannot penetrate. But behind all, the Lord, All-Sovereign, sitteth on His throne for ever, righteousness and judgment being the foundation of His throne.

Scripture and Prayer.

“They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.” Here is a direction in which one feels the need of sustained prayer is in the appropriation of spiritual quickening and light, especially perhaps in reading and meditating on Scripture. God gives us a glimpse of some great truth affecting life, conduct and work. But it is not to be appropriated in a minute, neither is it to come before us again as the result of a mere act of memory whensoever we will. As Jacob wrestled with the angel, so must we wrestle with this new message from God, thus must we bring every thought, even the highest and noblest, into captivity to the obedience of the Christ. The time that must be spent in the things of this world for obtaining the equipment for action is not more essential than time to be spent in learning obedience to a heavenly vision, in appropriating it, becoming possessed by it, engrossed with it, and this appropriation is attained not by dreaming on beautiful ideals, but by asking, seeking, knocking.

The Inspiration of the Scriptures.

The inspiration of the Bible, like not a few other expressions, was a phrase frequently used fifty years

ago, as expressing very clearly a meaning present to the mind of the speaker and as equally intelligible to the mind of the listener. In our own time it is far less frequently used, and often, when it is, it is listened to with considerable hesitation on the part of the listener. Does he really believe that the Bible is inspired? and if so, in what sense? There can be no doubt that the authority of the Bible has for the younger generation become, if not ~~un~~questionable, yet at least a proposition not generally assented to, or accepted in the sense in which it was accepted among Christians generally in the earlier and middle part of the last century. "I do not think," I heard a young missionary say not long ago, "that among the men of my time at the University, I knew any who I should say *fed* upon the Bible." The circumstance, I gathered, appeared to him to be on the whole quite natural. The remark was not made with any apparent feeling that this changed attitude of the young towards the Scriptures was to be regretted. I judged that he himself did not habitually seek the pasture-land of his soul in the green meadows of the written Word. Not that he consciously underrated the value of the Bible, but his personal experience of the worth and power of the Divine library as such, was not vivid, intense, enthusiastic, ever increasing with increasing knowledge. From another young missionary, apparently of the same school, I heard the following remarkable utterance in a prayer offered immediately after the reading by someone else without comment of Col. i. 9-20. "We thank Thee, Lord, for this thoughtful exposition by Thy servant" (*i.e.* St. Paul) "of the Gospel message." Of course, it was satisfactory to think that the speaker regarded St. Paul's sublime utterance as being thoughtful; but an exposition is not quite the same as an unveiling by the Spirit of God, speaking through the prophet of deep things of God; the understanding of which is not arrived at by thoughtfulness on the part of the speaker, but

by an immediate Divine suggestion of truth, which in earlier ages and other generations had not been made known unto the sons of men as it hath now been revealed by His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit. These facts of the lost sense of the authority of revelation have to be accepted, not as either inevitable or final, but as being a backward movement of an incoming tide. The Christian consciousness and experience is not, henceforth, to be limited to what the present generation of men do not see.

The student of Scripture will often find himself in the position of an artist gazing on the glory of a gorgeous sunrise (or sunset, but the Bible does not speak of glory, I think, in connexion with the setting sun), as he desires to paint what he sees, his powers fail; the changes are too rapid and too grand for art to do them justice. So it is with the living Word, the message of God to the individual soul, spoken and heard, revealed and seen, in the opening of heaven with which it was associated and which accompanied it. The burning bush was to Moses the turning point of a life. It was the beginning of a transformation of character and of purpose, which affected the whole of his subsequent career, but above all, it was a never-to-be-forgotten revelation of a living God.

All sorts of excellent ideals are found in the Chinese classics for excellent individuals. Nowhere is there found the thought of redemption. "Behold I make all things new." That thought of redemption and of the restitution of all things was present as a dream, an aspiration, a hope to Israel, but it was a veiled hope, an uncomprehended mystery. But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son. The Word became flesh. He became dead and lived again. Then was the great unveiling.

Things which eye saw not and ear heard not and which entered not into the heart of man, whatsoever things God prepared for them that love Him. But unto us God revealed it, *i.e.* the mystery above spoken

of. The revelation of God's wisdom and of His purposes and thoughts to man can only be made as man is prepared to receive it. The intangible and invisible and inaudible must needs be described to us in language appropriate to our condition. We must lay hold of eternal life. We must *look* for, as for something in the future or in the far distance, the New Heaven and the new earth. We must listen to songs of angelic messengers, or to words conceived of as spoken audibly in some distant past age, to somebody who has left them on record. And yet all along we are reminded that, "The word is nigh to us, even the word of faith." The eternal life is not separated from us by the grave, or by time; but by simple lack of apprehensive vitality. The music of the spheres can never be heard by the spiritually deaf, but by those fitted to discern it even now. Let us open the eyes of our souls to see with the vision of the pure in heart, let us open the ears of our spirits to hearken to what God, the Lord, has to say to us; not merely of personal concern, but concerning the Divine order of creation and redemption and of the life that is life indeed, and the world will for us here and now present itself in a new light.

Light.

There are three degrees of light to be found among men—but each comes from the same sources—the Light that lighteneth every man as he cometh into the world. The light in each case, however, shines with very varying degrees of brightness. To suppose that the light which exists in one heathen nation is either the same in every other heathen nation, or that in the same nation it shines with equal brilliancy in each individual heart, is, of course, untrue. But in general terms the light of the Gentile nations is of the same character.

The Light of Israel is the light of a chosen people—a people endowed with special mental and moral

characteristics, a people chosen to witness to a living and righteous God, Who made all men and Who can speak to men so that His voice can be recognized.

The Light that comes from Christ is final, it contains in itself the germ at least of all that God has to reveal to man. These things, held to be truth amongst the Gentiles, had often to be disowned when the Gentile became a convert to Judaism. Things accepted and cherished in Israel lost a great part of their significance, or required to be readjusted, as the Jew came to believe in Jesus as the Son of God. But while the Christian in his progress leaves many of his earlier beliefs and conceptions of the Christian Gospel behind him, it is not that he has accepted a new master that supersedes Christ, but that he has himself grown in his conception of what Christ meant by His teaching, or of what is really implied if not expressly taught in it.

The outer darkness is the condition which a man is by his own action absolutely incapacitated from that vision by which the pure in heart see God. The ghastliness of a world without God is like a motor car out of control making straight for the edge of a precipice, or a man looking in a looking-glass unable to recognize his own face.

“The fool hath said in his heart, ‘there is no God.’” This is the outer darkness—to dwell perpetually amidst all the mysteries that the Universe presents—with no clue to their solution. To see perpetually the mystery of suffering—but with eyes closed to the mystery of love. Here and now there are sufficient diversions of thought-passing excitements, the gratification of self-will, the pleasures of sin, the power of self-deception to make men temporarily, but only temporarily, content with surroundings in which the need of God is not felt. But not for such a shallow and deceptive existence was man made.

“He endured as seeing Him who is invisible.

Who among us shall dwell with the Devouring Fire.”

Creeds.

We do well to remember in regard to all subjects of belief—the various statements of the Apostles' Creed included—that their truth or their untruth is not dependent on our belief, nor is it affected by our unbelief, but the difference to ourselves may be and must be, enormous, and likewise the difference to our living influence on other people.

But in this, as in many other matters, it seems to be God's way in the spiritual education of the race, that there should be a continual shaking of such faiths and convictions as can be shaken, that the eternal foundations may be more diligently sought for, and when found should give an eternal confidence to believers.

Law.

I was sitting watching a ray of sunlight a few days ago as it streamed into my room through a chink in the shutters. I noticed minute particles of dust floating about, impelled by some current of air too slight to be otherwise perceptible to my senses. I began to think how the motion of each of these tiny particles was subject to Law. How there was a reason why each one moved in the particular direction and at the particular pace which I noticed. Then I began to speculate on the influence of the movement of each of these little specks of dust on the surrounding atmosphere. Each particle as it passed through the air displaced the air; that displacement, I perceived, must lead to further consequences—consequences too infinitesimal for the mind of man to take cognizance of, and not too infinitesimal for the Infinite God to perceive and to make provision for.

We are not fit for the abrogation of law till the law has become a part of our nature and has incorporated itself into our lives. This consideration removes the chief objection which is urged against

living by rule. People say that living by rule is inconsistent with the liberty of the Gospel. Yes, if the rules cramp and confine us and hold us back, but not if they simply make us keep to the path of duty. A railway train would not be more truly free if it got off the metals than if it kept closely to them. We must learn to live wholly above the law before we can regard the law in our case as abrogated. There are many things in which I have learnt to live wholly above the law, *e.g.*, in regard to murder, theft, etc. But in regard to some other things, alas! it is not so! When I come under the rules binding me to regularity in the matter of eating and drinking, rising and going to bed, taking time for prayer and reading the Scriptures, I at once feel the existence of law as I do not feel it in regard to other things. The restriction may be of two kinds. (1.) A restriction on passing and unworthy impulses and on irresoluteness of will, or (2.) a restriction on higher impulses and on the free operation of God's Spirit in any life. In the former case the restriction is wholly good. The relaxation of law may tend—not to give me really greater Christian liberty,—but to bring me into an unchristian bondage by causing me to glide into a state of indolent disregard of life. In the latter case, where the restriction is a restriction from higher good, the rule is more honoured in the breach than in the observance. A rule, *e.g.* which tells me to rise at a given hour, would act injuriously if on an occasion of emergency it led me to neglect some higher and nobler principle. But so long as such a rule is only felt as a check on looseness of will and infirmity of purpose it is wholly in accordance with the spirit of the Gospel.

Stone was the appropriate material in which to convey to men that law which could be given in this way—a clear, definite, tangible, abiding,—as stone is abiding, till He should come, Who, without writing a line—save once in sand—could say, "Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but My word shall never pass away."

Subjection, and subordination in human society and in the Church, is a part of the Divine order, which is much overlooked by many Christians nowadays, and by few more than by myself. That the Church is subject to Christ and that all individual submission to human and ecclesiastical law must be in the fear of Christ, is the fundamental truth which guards conscience and the duty we owe to others, but I have often been unsubmissive and have refused subjection in what was the spirit of self-assertion covered with a veneer of misinterpretation of the law of Christian liberty.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

UPON PRAYER AND FAITH

THE mystery of prayer may be great, but that the duty of prayer is laid on every believer in Christ is unquestionable. That Christians will pray is constantly assumed in the New Testament, even as the habit of prayer is constantly enjoined. Prayer to be acceptable to God does not consist of so many definite petitions for things we deem to be desirable. It is first and foremost a submission of the person praying to the Will of God. But it is more than this, it is a glad acceptance of that Will, not altogether unaccompanied with definite perception that it is the Will of God, and a will which calls for our co-operation. The reason why it calls thus for our acceptance, and the manner in which our prayer can have a value of its own, it may be difficult for us—especially in some earth-bound moods—to understand, or even to imagine, but in times of spiritual insight we can imagine it in part. A petition offered to God that He would accomplish some definite part of what we believe to be His will is a submission, an offering up of self, to Him as a means, if He be pleased to accept the offering, for this accomplishment. We may be able to picture to ourselves how God might use us, or we may not, but the thought is this—"Lo, I come to do Thy Will, O God"—I as a member of the Body of Christ. "Mine ears hast Thou opened. A body hast Thou prepared for me"—a body in which to do or to suffer. "Here am I, send me."

There are cases, and they are many—in which we can at least imagine how God could use us directly—

could give a power, beyond that which we ourselves are conscious of possessing, to accomplish a certain end—an end, perhaps, that we shrink from trying to accomplish in our own strength. There are cases again, in which God may be able to use us in ways that either do not occur to us, or in ways that only imply a subordinate part than we might be called on to play—ways in which to the end we might be unaware that we had any part. We being what we are, if we are true to Him and to the principles of His Kingdom, might, quite unconsciously to ourselves, move others who are in a position totally different from our own, to accomplish ends that we had not clearly thought of as relevant, which nevertheless were essential links in the chains of God's purposes. Can we not think of earnest, believing prayers offered hundreds of years ago for ends connected with the Kingdom of God, as it was then conceived, which led then to certain results of an immediate character that were themselves the beginning of other movements affecting the world's history long, long after? There are prayers which in motive and in spirit are entirely pagan. There is scarcely a vestige of any idea in the mind of the person praying, but that of some form of covetousness, or of a desire or some form of revenge or self-seeking. The records of such prayers as answered (as in the case of Samson), form one of the gravest stumbling blocks to faith in the reading of the Old Testament by many not very intelligent persons, who come to the study of the book with preconceived ideas of inspiration and of the ways of God.

Are we not continually acting as if, in the ordinary work and duties of life, we were independent of prayer and of realized fellowship with God? We are apt to assign a place to God's influence, power and guidance in our lives by setting apart times for prayer and by giving prayer—private, family or congregational—a special place in the programme of each day, but the attitude of constant waiting upon God in everything,

—an ideal not to be reached by mere formalities of access to Him—is largely wanting in our lives, and in consequence much of our action is merely mechanical or self-reliant—not spiritual, or consciously to ourselves the result of a Divine guidance, or leading, or support.

Notes upon Steadfastness in Prayer.

Conditions of steadfastness in Prayer—

(1.) A deep and ever-present conviction from God the Holy Spirit of the supreme importance of the invisible and eternal world, of the significance, purpose, reality and intensity of the sufferings of Christ.

(2.) A living faith in the obligation, relevance and utility of prayer, the matter of which must be divinely suggested to us and the offering of which must be through the working of the Spirit Himself. In thus dealing with God we must recognize a part assigned to us by God which we cannot neglect without infinite loss. The Christian priesthood has been committed to us, as really as the authority to become the children of God.

(3.) A perpetual submission to Divine discipline which will be easier the younger we are, when we submit to it, more difficult the longer we have delayed, and the more we have come under the tyranny of habits of a contrary tendency to the habit of continuous and energetic prayer. We must deliberately put from us this obstacle and that, we must be prepared, if need be, to wait long in the vestibule of the Divine audience chamber and to use holy violence in prayer.

(4.) A constant love in which we are rooted and grounded—something quite different from being merely stirred up by tender and transient feeling, so that we shall long to impart to others that which we know to be highest and best in our own life.

He that overcometh God shall overcome all things. The prevailing prayer of Abraham for Sodom, the

prevailing power of Jacob with the angel at Peniel, the prevailing prayer and supplication with strong crying and tears of the Son of God—are all examples of the power of man in prayer. It is as if God Himself offered to our faith the greatest resistance it can ever meet with, encouraging us all the time and yet resisting till the soul has learnt the lesson of resolute, determined, overcoming faith. “I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me.” The languid prayer that cannot wrest from the willing yet (in love) resisting God the gifts of His grace, will not avail against the resistance to good which is ever being offered by Satan and an evil nature within. Wesley’s magnificent hymn on wrestling Jacob is full of spiritual meaning ; it is the interpretation by a Christian prophet of one of the most wonderful events ever witnessed in the experience of man.

If the morning watch is of importance, not less important is the evening one—though, to me, at least, far more difficult of attainment. If we need to begin the day in the conscious realization of the Divine presence and the Divine strength and guidance, not less do we need to end it in the realization of the Divine forgiveness of sin, and the Divine acceptance of honest, albeit imperfect, service. How else can we rest in wakeful hours, or receive from Him Who giveth songs in the night ?

The only position from which we can hope to right what is wrong is at the footstool of the Throne of the Eternal Righteousness.

“Ask and it shall be given you, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you.” The giving that comes to us without asking, the finding that comes without seeking, the opening of doors that is from the action of the Opener, and in no sense a response to knocking, is that part of God’s goodness which we share in common with the heathen. Our Lord here sets before us something very much higher—the fellowship of the Father with the Son which

He ever enjoyed Himself (John xi. 42), and which He came to impart to us as a part of our inheritance in Him. Ask for love and He shall give it unto you, seek love and He will be found of you, knock and the door of love shall be opened unto you by Him Who loved us and gave Himself up for us.

Let prayer give the tone to the work of each day. A large amount of work performed in a prayerless spirit will be certainly fruitless. A much smaller amount done in childlike dependence on God will as certainly be fruitful.

The Kingdom is the Lord's, not ours, and the work must be His—God working in us. Active work will not necessarily lead to prayer, but earnest prayer will for a certainty lead to work.

Prayer that has no reference to action is a thing that needs to be jealously watched. It may become a fruitful source of self-deception. We must pray in order to work successfully, but we must work in order to pray sincerely.

Times for Prayer.

A Christian should have at least three stated hours for prayer a day—hours when he can pray calmly and deliberately, withdrawing himself from the din and the bustle of the world, and realizing that he is alone with God. This is one of the things in regard to which we want a conscience. Conscience upbraids most Christians if they neglect the morning and evening worship. They want a similar impulse in regard to a third or mid-day hour of prayer. Such an impulse or conscience would materially help to overcome the difficulties which lie in the way of setting apart a stated time of prayer at mid-day. The difficulty of praying and meditating at that time in the day—I mean the difficulty caused by the deadness of soul which one so often feels when in the midst of our daily occupation,—is one of the strongest proofs of the need we have of the exercise.

When public services are multiplied and one is drawn into a variety of religious duties in one's official capacity, there is a great danger of allowing oneself to substitute these public acts of worship for private and solitary worship, and for the devotional reading of Scripture. It is a fatal mistake for a minister of Christ or for anyone else to lose his private life in a public one. Public worship and the communion of saints can only be profitable when conjoined with private worship. So far from public services being a substitute for private devotions they call for increased constancy and fervour in secret prayer.

In the Father's House.

"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." He likes to roam through the world as through an ownerless waste, to see in everything there is to see, no creative, or upholding power behind it, no future before it, nothing sacred within it. To the believer "the fulness of the whole earth is God's glory." He likes to walk everywhere with a sense of being in one or other of the many resting places that exist in the Father's domain, to see in everything, the grass, the birds, the heavens, the earth, the sea, traces of God's presence and God's working. But this confidence of faith is not always equally bright, one act of conscious disobedience can overcloud his outlook, abounding sin in others can do the same, and he becomes like the hart, panting, moaning over dried waterbrooks. Into that inward desolation of spirit it was necessary for the world's Redeemer to pass, if indeed He was to be in all points tried as we are. Think what it must have been to Christ to have in His own inner consciousness a sense of the sin of the world, to realize, to Him, Whose whole life was in the conscious enjoyment of God's favour, to realize the thoughts, the feelings, of men and women to whom God is nothing, and the world an ownerless waste.

Faith.

The Rock on Whom our faith rests is unseen. Faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen. This being so, nothing in the seen can touch it or shake it. The Christian cannot reconsider his position continually in the light of some new discoveries in the region of the seen; for faith, the faith by which he lives and walks, is by hypothesis not in the seen. "God is our refuge and strength . . . therefore will we not fear, though the earth," the total sum of all that surrounds us—"be removed, though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea." The most fearful upheaval of Nature, wars, rumours of wars, famines, pestilence, the sun darkened, the moon not giving her light, the stars of heaven falling—of all these things our Master has told us before. They cannot take us by surprise if we have weighed well His words. They cannot be a shock to faith which rests on Him, rather they confirm it. If *we* in accepting Him had not considered the apparent conflict between faith and experience, *He*, at least, had considered it and all the sad and suffering side of life was present to His mind and in His teaching when He claimed our faith and bid us fix our hope on God.

The Miraculous.

I think that a faith in the miraculous and in miracles is essential to a true conception of God's ordering of the world and of a Divine revelation, and for that purpose miracles have a certain evidential power of their own, without which Christianity could not establish its claim on the world. But there comes in the history of many Christians a time when the questions arise, Did these incidents actually take place? How would my faith stand if I gave up all belief in the miraculous, including the actual resurrection of the Lord from the dead as related in the Gospel? To

many believers who have had their questionings on this subject, the time comes—ultimately it must come to all such—when the miracle shines as it were by its own light. It is the revelation of new forces and new possibilities revealed in the physical world by the exercise of a spiritual power entirely distinct from scientific knowledge or development for “matter itself is spiritual.”

The mysteries of life do not grow less as the world advances on its course, and as Nature comes to be better understood, so far as its mechanical and impersonal workings are concerned. It does not seem to be God's purpose that it should be otherwise. That “the just shall live by faith” is the law of the universe as it regards man in his dealings with a living God. And as man advances in intelligence and in the knowledge of material things, so does the demand of God in the spiritual realm of life advance also. The faith of childhood is not sufficient to meet the demands on faith for which fuller knowledge of the conditions of our existence calls. On the other hand Nature, as the character of God, is better understood and assumes an aspect that it can never wear for those who do not know God. These are but the outskirts of His ways. That character cannot be perceived with even approximate correctness from Nature and the processes of Nature alone. Man is God's image, blurred, disfigured, self-contradictory.

Easter.

Now in regard to Easter this is the fact that we desire to think of, this is the thought that runs through all our best Easter hymns, not that Jesus Christ by His teaching or by His example or in any such way made the doctrine of the immortality of the soul more sure than it had ever been before, the Easter triumph is that Christ having died the common death of man under circumstances the most appalling

that the mind can conceive, arose from the dead, under circumstances utterly unlike any that had ever occurred before ; arose—that is, the setting up of something fallen down, not merely lived again !

The Spiritual Sense.

The word Faith, which is so full of meaning to the believer, and which is ever deepening in its meaning as he progresses in the life of faith, is a poor word to those who regard it from an outside point of view, as merely the equivalent of belief, which belief may be not very far removed from credulity or prejudice. But some definition of the word might be given in the dictionary which, if it would not convey the full meaning of faith to the unbeliever, yet might at least arrest his attention, and lead him to see what is claimed for faith and what according to the testimony of believers faith means to them. Something of this sort might be said of it in this its secondary meaning : “ A kind of sixth or spiritual sense by which it is claimed that spiritual realities may become as real to the apprehension of man as material objects become to that apprehension, through the medium of the five senses. On the other hand, it is affirmed that this extra and spiritual sense, although a part of man’s original constitution, was largely lost or weakened by the Fall, and, until recovered and embraced, these same spiritual realities remain largely in the region of the unknown and the inconceivable even as colour is inconceivable to the blind, or sound and harmony to the deaf.”

There is a great deal of agnosticism in the position of the Christian, and the more our knowledge grows the more we feel how many questions there are connected with religion in regard to which we are quite ignorant. But behind the agnosticisms of the Christian is faith in God. Difficulties and mysteries are the clouds and darkness that surround the throne

of the Almighty, omniscient, perfect God, and we leave our perplexities humbly with Him. Behind the agnosticism of unbelief is self-confidence, darkness and distrust.

Detached Thoughts.

Is not prayerlessness a slighting of God ?

The spirit of uncomplaining submissiveness to the Will of God which finds expression in such hymns as "My God, my Father, while I stray," is a spirit that ought always to express the Christian's attitude of mind in even the deepest affliction, as being—if one may so say—the lowest limit of Christian thought and feeling to which a true faith in God can descend. But the spirit of triumphant acceptance of the will of God which finds expression in some of the Psalms (145), and in many of our Christian hymns (*e.g.*, "The King of Love my Shepherd is") represents, I think, a more distinctively Christian attitude of mind to which under all circumstances the Christian should seek to aspire.

Wisdom is not all knowledge, nor the cleverness that can grasp all knowledge. It is the moral and spiritual character that can discern the way of God in nature, in providence, in goodness, etc., etc., and knows how to act for oneself in harmony therewith.

The wisdom of God does not consist in an indefinite amount of either knowledge or of power in ordering and controlling things—but in the way to accomplish purposes worthy of God. And the secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, with them that love Him.

Prayer in the Name of Christ.

To ask for patience and wisdom and love in dealing with persons or questions where our feelings are strongly set in the direction of immediate action that

would be hasty, incisive and not calculated to conciliate, is obviously desirable ; it is not difficult to put up a sudden prayer on this line, but to continue in prayer till the true answer is gained and the power of self-repression and the tenderness and the love that are necessary are won so that we can go forth in the strength of the Lord God to overcome the difficulty we felt before and to save the offender, this is a different matter. But it is only to such prayer that an answer is promised. Again to intercede in the spirit of mild benevolence for some sinner whom we would fain deliver from his sin and its consequences is one thing ; to surrender ourselves to God in prayer, to lay down our lives at His footstool on this sinner's behalf, to enter into the mind of the Saviour in regard to him and to place ourselves at God's disposal, to do anything that He shall see good in order to forward or to accomplish the end for which we have asked is quite another matter ; and here there must be great intensity alike of faith and love and hope as well as zeal and importunity to bring within our reach the answer and the gift of God by which alone the end can be attained. Much need have we to pray " Lord teach us to pray as Thou Thyself didst pray," and to such entreaty we may hear the response, " Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name," *i.e.* I asked, as I have by example taught you to pray, " that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son."

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

UPON LOVE

VERY early this morning, as I awoke, the Word of the Lord came to me with great and to me unusual power in the familiar phrase, "God is love." It repeated itself until it seemed to illuminate all my mind and understanding with perfect light, shining out in every direction, showing me some of the great problems of life in a new aspect, and especially making plain to me what such a confession implied as to an answering conduct and plan of life in my own case. And as I thought thereon other Divine words came to mind, as it were a chorus of voices chanting on the same theme, and impressing on me the thought that this was not merely a word of personal assurance to me individually of God's attitude towards a sinful and unfaithful servant, but as providing the key, the only key to all the problems of the universe; and that everything seemed to converge and to radiate from Jesus crucified, risen, ascended; so the Love of God, eternal, omnipresent Love, incarnate, comes into the world to exhibit the course of the Divine Love in contact with the conditions of life as it exists in this world. I saw how this must needs awaken hostility in the mind of men generally, man being what he is, and must for those who participate in the Divine quality of love involve great suffering in a world constituted as this is. To this revelation of God as love the first great commandment in the law corresponds as the natural and reasonable demand of the God Who is love made upon man as created in His image, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all the faculties, energies and

endowments of the nature wherewith He has endowed thee." And the second is like unto it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself," the man highest to thee, not abstract man or man at the Antipodes, but the man whom God in His providence has linked with thee.

The goal of the Christian life is love. "God is love." But this brief sentence does not represent God as being an abstract virtue. Neither are we called to arrive at this goal of love by any other road than that of active and self-surrendering devotion to Him Who so loved us. Without faith it is impossible to please God. It is through faith alone that we attain to love. The faith required is that of a simple, but unhesitating inward assurance of the loving purpose and character of God as revealed in Christ, conjoined with a like assurance that we personally are both bound to be in this matter imitators of God and are also able to attain by His grace to this resemblance.

"Love covereth a multitude of sins," *i.e.* sins in the one beloved. But the cultivation of love also requires great watchfulness in ourselves, watchfulness against hasty speech, and against unloving thoughts, watchfulness for opportunity to manifest love, thoughtfulness as to ways in which love can show itself, the instant repression of grievances, the remembrance of the deepest need of others to which often they themselves are not alive. And if we are required to be watchful in order that we may attain to this grace of loving we are also bound to realize the extreme seriousness of failure, where we are conscious that through want of watchfulness, or through indulging in a lower ideal and giving place to an unloving spirit, we have fallen short.

The first and great commandment of the law corresponds with the last and final revelation of the Being and Character of God in the person of Jesus Christ, and in the grace of the Gospel. The second commandment is like the first in its essential character, and

corresponds with the revelation given to us in the Gospel of the purpose of God in the creation and redemption of man. "God is love," but love without an object is unthinkable. The love of God is eternally in the Godhead. "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into His hands." And how? Wherefore hath God given all things into the hands of the Son? In order that the sum of all things, the whole creation which now groans and travails in pain may, through the accomplishment in man of his proper destiny, be brought to its completion and perfection. Man is not an individual but a family and a race, separated now, in fact, by sin into warring units, or warring combinations of individuals, each seeking in such combination some private advantage for himself and his personal friends. But this is a fall from the design of creation. Happily, the true ideal of fellowship and social existence still remains, even if in imperfect form in families and even in Christian societies where love is the predominant feature of the corporate life, while each member of the family or of the religious society fulfils his or her own special function, thereby ministering to and supplying the needs of others.

My own great need, and as I judge the need of all others, is to strive by faith in God and in the spirit of true vision to realize in daily life and in all its relations that our call is to be ever seeking by earnest effort, including effort in prayer, to realize that love is not only that in which through the knowledge of God in Christ we may all participate, but our bounden duty. To manifest love, to live in love, ordering all our actions with love as the method of proceedings and also as the goal to be gained, this and nothing less than this is that to which we are called of God and for which we have been redeemed.

To love one's neighbour as oneself has become a sort of orthodox formula of religious expression to which most people assent without thought and

without question. To realize it in life, as a daily, hourly duty, binding on us at all times and in relation to all people whom we meet (and this is the idea of neighbourhood), is a first duty of the Christian life ; but because love is such a restful and blessed state of existence it is not, therefore, a state of existence to be attained without effort or by mere passivity ; it is the life of Him Who came down from heaven, not to do His own will, but the will of Him Who sent Him. It is a life of consuming inward activity, of constant watching unto prayer, of deliberate self-renunciation. But neighbourhood in space does not define the limits within which love is to be felt impelling us. We may be near in space to people from whom we are far removed in either sympathy or in the understanding of their inner needs ; and, on the other hand, we may be drawn by deep sympathy very near to people who are at a great distance, and the sympathy may be so deep as to find means of overleaping the space of separation.

It is the love of man to God that alone enables us to overleap the barriers of space or other similar hindrances in the development and manifestation of love to our kind. And here surely comes in great light on the question of intercessory prayer. A man who is living, more or less, the self-life may be very devout, very desirous of being right with God, and of having right and correct views of God and of personal obedience and so on, and yet be lacking in the Divine impulse of imparting righteousness, saving sinners, becoming a channel of communication between God and a dark and suffering world. The awakening of this new instinct of salvation will be the birth of a living apprehension of intercessory prayer.

The oyster makes pearls to cover hard, foreign substances in its shell. The Christian with the pearl of love covers transgressions.

The journey from fear (as a constraining and guiding force in attaining wisdom), to a love which ever basks in the light and love which is in God the Source, the

centre and completion of all wisdom, of all knowledge, all counsel, all understanding, is a long one. But when it is attained, it results in a fear of a different kind—the fear of either not having been made perfect in love, or of not manifesting a love that works in others that fear of the Lord which should be the beginning of the highest love.

Preaching to the Chinese Christians on “This is My commandment that ye love one another as I have loved you,” I was made to feel the awfulness of Christ’s command and of our own hope in regard thereto. Whom do I love as Christ has loved me? Whom do I love even as I love these nearest to me by ties of natural affection with the same desire to be considerate for them, to shelter them, to hide their failings, to bear their burdens? “Even as the Father has loved Me I also have loved you.” “Even as I have loved you love ye one another, this is my commandment.”

“Love never faileth.” God’s love to me, God’s love in me. The surrender to love is a surrender to God, that He may be glorified in us, and that we may possess all power to obey Him perfectly, and to conquer every enemy within and without, evil temper, annoying people, and all that opposes our Lord Jesus.

The remedy for unlovingness is to be found in realizing the love of God; but to do this there must be active effort of a practical nature. Perform thoughtfully, deliberately, loving actions for others than those whom we love, because of our affinity to them, and the spirit of love, disinterested love, will thereby be stimulated; and new perception of the character of God’s love and love will be quickened in us.

The proof of love is not bountifulness but self-surrender. Not what we *give* but what we are willing to *share* is the test of that.

“Ye *therefore* shall be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.” The *therefore* refers back specially

to Matthew v. 44-45, and the perfection spoken of is seen to be the perfection of love. Love is the fulfilling of the law, both of the Old Testament and of the New. Love is the perfection of God, for "God is love," and the ideal for the Christian is this of being made perfect in love. But this command, like all God's commands, is command and promise in one, and this fact apprehended by faith transmutes it entirely into a blessing on which the believer delights continually to meditate. "His delight is in the law of the Lord and in His law doth he meditate day and night." The law as set forth by the Scribes and Pharisees was not a revelation of the love of God, and hence it was presented to men as a heavy burden and grievous to be borne. But as set forth by Christ it was altogether a different matter, "My burden is light"; it is *My* burden, and it is supported on a yoke which throws the weight on shoulders able to bear it. His commandments are not heavy. "I will run the way of Thy commandments when Thou shalt enlarge my heart."

"And who is my neighbour?" The question is one that all need to ask again and again as we seek the true justification that comes as by the gift of God. To see neighbourhood with all its obligations as Christ sets them forth is one of the lifelong trials and incidents of discipline in the Christian life. The parable of the trials and incidents of discipline in the Christian life, the parable of the good Samaritan, and that of the unmerciful servant are eternal mirrors in which to look at ourselves. So likewise is that of the Pharisee and the publican.

There is no more obvious duty and certain evidence of true love than the desire to cover the faults and weaknesses of those we love, and to help them at the same time to overcome them. A wife who proclaims her husband's faults lowers herself in the esteem of every right-minded person. One who is indifferent to those faults is not a true lover. The duty of the

Christian family is to shelter one another as far as possible from exposure to condemnation, and to pray and strive for one another's highest weal.

The love of Christ is manifested in His intense desire and will to share His best with the objects of His love, and this should call forth in us not only adoring gratitude, but also the spirit of emulation. "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." Our poor discipleship often consists at best of intense desire for our own spiritual progress and perfection, accompanied by a desire, but an immensely less potent desire, for the spiritual well-being of others, the conversion of the unconverted, the growth in grace of the converted. Our Lord in the highest department of life fulfilled the royal law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." The thought is sometimes overwhelming, what did Christ go through for the fulfilment of this law? Having foregone the pains and sins and sorrows of men, taken upon Himself the Cross and all its agony,—these were all steps by which the Captain of our salvation brought many sons to glory in accordance with the Father's will. "He that is near Me is near the fire," but in that very nearness is our life and our one chance of beholding His glory, and beholding to be changed into the same image from glory to glory. A constant love will long to impart to others that which we know to be highest and best in our own life.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

OLD AGE AND THE FUTURE LIFE

HAVING now myself got into the eighth decade of life, I feel that birthdays acquire increasingly a new significance. A sentence I culled from Dr. McLeod Campbell's life some years ago often recurs to me as at least what ought to be one's feeling as the shadows of evening lengthen out. "I bless God that to me old Age's waking consciousness is infinitely sweeter than the brightest dreams of early days," and again, "I long ago learned no longer to live in time apart from eternity—taught to live the eternal life now in time."

I cannot doubt that as life draws to its close we are in the loving providence of our God subjected to new forms of trial and discipline. These, though of an unexpected severity, may, in the light of His love and of His purpose towards us in Christ Jesus our Lord, be seen to be just what we need in order to reveal to us the things in which our lives have most egregiously failed. Some of them it may now be too late actively to remedy, for the day of opportunity has gone by, souls that we have neglected have now passed out of our conscious reach, characters that might have been formed under humble response to the quiet and secret influence of the Holy Spirit have now been formed after a different model, and whatever God in His grace, our Saviour Christ by His saving power, can make of us, it cannot now be what once it might have been. The result of this inward enlightenment is and necessarily must be most utterly humiliating. But is it not indeed well for us that the self-humiliation

which we did not seek with our whole heart in order that God in all things alone should be glorified, should now be brought to us and shown to belong properly to us by the discipline of what we call experience? It is needful for us also to learn more entirely the inexorableness of God and of His perfect holiness. How apt is man in his weak, easy going, low-toned goodness to say of things, "It cannot be helped now, say no more about it, make the best of it and go on to the next thing." God our Father does not thus deny Himself or revoke His promise. "Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord thy God am holy." Christ our patient Redeemer, the same yesterday, to-day and for ever, does not thus revoke or nullify His command: "Be ye perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect." Still the word holds good. "We must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God," enter, that is, not as it were for the first time into a new and hitherto strange region of the Diviner domain, but into our full inheritance in the kingdom.

If the span of a human life amidst the limitations of the present surroundings of each one represented the whole course of a mortal existence, one might not unreasonably expect to find within these same limitations the justification, if not also the explanation, of all life's experiences. But if life in time is but an incident and a parenthesis in an immortal existence, it is no cause for wonder if we are continually confronted with the fact that here we have no continuing city, and that the world as we see it was not made for the permanent or exhaustive satisfaction of the inhabitants of earth or the dwellers in time.

What a blessing it is to think that hereafter amidst all the physical beauty of heaven, the moral glory of the Redeemer will be seen underlying all, lightening all. Here we gaze on nature and on art, and it is only by an effort that we see in each object of beauty something to speak to us of God; but there we may expect the connexion between the physical and the spiritual

to be so close, so inseparable that our thoughts will naturally and spontaneously pass from the one to the other. And just as the thought of the lamp is lost in the light which shines from it, or just as the thought of the mirror is lost in the figure reflected in it, so will the physical be lost in the spiritual or rather transfigured in the spiritual. Why should we not here and now cultivate more than we do the habit of continually seeing God in His works and of finding spiritual instruction and edification in the contemplation of natural grace and beauty?

Deeply impressed in further meditation on the immanence, the constant coming, the presence of my Lord, the Son of Man. The duty of readiness, preparedness, not hand-to-mouth, shoddy, worthless service. The suddenness, the unexpectedness of His coming. The wide range of duty and experience in which He comes to test and to commend or to condemn. The irrevocableness of failure and of closed door.

Let no man whom God has called to His service among the heathen ever draw back from it till he hears a voice calling him to do so, speaking as clearly as he heard the voice which gave him his original call; and recognizes that it is his Master's voice. Then let him in the same spirit of absolute and fearless self-surrender obey, but not until he is absolutely sure of the call and absolutely sure of his own self-renunciation.

As we look back on life it often seems to flow through two channels—the channel of God's purpose, abounding grace, forbearance and persevering love; and the channel of human performance—constant dullness, blindness, perverseness, indolence, failure, unloveliness, disobedience to the heavenly vision, restlessness, faithlessness, sin. But we dare not lose sight of the former, or fix our thoughts only on the latter, without committing the final act of unbelief. The words of the creed are more true than our faithlessness, and oft as we repeat it we may once anew encourage ourselves on God and once again claim the blessing.

“ Our Father—Thy will be done ! ” “ The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.”

It is a great thought that “ we *have* come unto the general assembly and church of the firstborn, who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.” The sacred associations we have with the anniversaries of days on which those we loved most were taken from us would not lose anything, if we observed more of such anniversaries for others of the saints with whom we have been associated in life and who are now no more with us. A textbook for birthdays into the life to come would be a more sacred and suggestive book to keep by us than most of the birthday textbooks that people keep.

I cannot understand how people can talk about not recognizing friends in the life to come. It has long been a sort of fundamental article of my creed that we shall lose nothing in the resurrection life that was ever worth having, while we shall gain a fulness of blessing in every direction, such as we never dreamt of here, “ not that we would be unclothed but clothed upon.” We are like folk complaining in cold weather of the insufficiency of our clothing, and the remedy is not to strip such people of garments they cherish, but to give the additional garments to make them warm. O how little we take in of the blessedness of the life to come !

We know not yet the “ power of God ” to uphold a totally different order from that which prevails here. We can dimly guess at, or half conceive, some things that *may* be, but that I think is all, *e.g.*, here all our ideas of life so centre in the individual, but there it may be that our union with one another in Christ may much more nearly, and in some at present unimaginable way, correspond to the ideal of a “ Body of Christ ” than anything we have seen, even the closest Christian fellowship on earth could do. The things of heaven may require a new language to describe them and new faculties to apprehend them.

The silence of Scripture is impressive in regard to this. The golden streets and pearly gates, etc., etc., are the nearest we can get to a conception of the outward aspect of the city of God, but even this is an accommodation to human language. It is like trying to describe to people, with a half barbarian language, some of those things which can only be expressed in the language of advanced civilization.

I cannot understand how people think and speak, as many do, of going to be with departed friends. The thought of Christ as being all in all to us hereafter seems to me very clearly brought out in Scripture. Earthly relationships (which I do not doubt will be renewed in Heaven) must fall into an utterly subordinate place, as compared with that one great and supreme relationship of each believer to Christ. John, in the first part of his heavenly vision, felt himself to be alone with the risen Lord, and it seems to me very natural to suppose that, at all events, our first entrance into His immediate presence will be of the same character, with nothing to divert the mind from the awe and majesty of His person. I feel an increasing dread of anything that would make it appear as if Christ by Himself would not be sufficient to fill up our heaven. But, of course, I do not mean to say we shall not find in the society of those we loved on earth, and of the holy and good of all ages, joy and delight. It is the prominence given to the renewal of these relationships that I do not like.

God in Christ will hold the supreme place in such a way that our relation to our fellow-beings will, though conceivably far more intimate and close than on earth, be entirely subordinate to our conscious relation to Him. In the meantime, God, by giving us no light whatever on the present occupation of the departed, or of their present or future relationship to ourselves, has shut us up to filling heaven with God as it were, and, if we are not content to do that, we are thrown back on speculation and imagina-

tion, and after all, probably we are trying to imagine the unimaginable, for the conditions of life beyond the grave may be, to beings like ourselves, unintelligible, impossible, or "unlawful" to speak of or to utter.

The vastness of God's universe does, in some ways, make our sense of perplexity greater, as we think of the life beyond. And yet it seems to me in this very thought, as well as in the thought of the infinity of God's holiness, love, wisdom and resources, and in the thought of the measurelessness of eternal life, we may find immense consolation. In considering the life beyond death, we are manifestly out of our depths, and dealing with subjects entirely beyond our present powers. We are, perforce, thrown back on faith, simple trust in the government, the competence—if one may use such a term with reverence—and the infinite love of God. To His gracious and tender care, which gave us Christ, and which we and our loved ones have so often proved on earth, we commit them when they leave us. It is not yet made manifest what they shall be, to what new developments their life as the children of God will now advance, but we know that when it is manifested they shall be like Him, for they shall see Him even as He is. I always feel for myself that my highest and best hopes for those whom I have loved who are now with Christ would be sensibly lowered and curtailed, if I thought that I could in any wise picture to my mind's eye either their present surroundings or their present occupations. I think peace comes to us just through being able to lean in conscious, absolute ignorance of their present condition, and conscious inability even to imagine it, on God Whom we have learnt to know in Jesus Christ. We think of what He was when dwelling visibly among men, in the midst of things and circumstances that we can in a measure understand, and with which we are in a measure familiar. We think of what He was in those days to His disciples, and of what He has been by His Spirit in some measure

to His people on earth since He ascended to heaven, and then we think of Him, and of them, all alike lifted up to a higher and altogether different sphere—the Christ, with His own, seated in the heavenly places, and I think all perplexity is at an end, though mystery remains, and for us the intense pain of present separation.

We must not try to picture them again as in conditions like those of earth, but try to rise in imagination to the life where Christ is all in all and where they see Him as He is. The vision will not always come at our bidding, but it is possible to get glimpses of it at all times, and at such times to be filled with profound thankfulness for what those who have gone before have already gained, and to look forward with faith and patience to the time when our own life will be similarly uplifted to see the King in His beauty and all His redeemed ones in their immediate relationship to Himself.

There is wonderful teaching—not less applicable to this subject than to many others—in our Lord's words about loving life and losing it, and losing it for His sake and finding it. He repeats them with intentional variations, in several different connexions. We cling to life, or to anything in life, apart from what it reveals to us of Himself, and we lose all in it that could have made it most precious and most enduring. We surrender life or any other treasure to Him, seeking, henceforth, to see Him only, and the treasure comes back to us a new possession, a source of new and hitherto unknown joy and satisfaction, and to be ours for ever.

To me there is a sense of restfulness and satisfaction in my conscious inability to imagine the conditions of that life into which those who depart hence in the Lord have entered. I think the New Testament idea of heaven is purposely summed up for us in language that at once lifts us above all attempts at imagining mentally what can only be realized spiritually, "to

be with Christ," "for ever with the Lord." There are two very favourite verses of mine in a hymn of Charles Wesley's, which begins, "Where shall true believers go, When from the flesh they fly?"

"But their greatest happiness
 Their highest joy shall be,
 God their Saviour to possess,
 To know and love and see.
 With that beautiful sight,
 Glorious ecstasy is given,
 This is their supreme delight,
 And makes a heaven of heaven.

Him beholding face to face,
 To Him they glory give,
 Bless His name and sing His praise
 As long as God shall live.
 While eternal ages roll,
 Thus employed in Heaven they are,
 Lord receive my happy soul
 With all Thy servants there."

These verses seem to me to present the Christian hope on the right lines, and to give one a worthy conception of the glory of the redeemed, by lifting up our imagination to heaven, instead of bringing down heaven to our imagination.

The Chinese method of explaining words is by giving their opposite. With faith, hope and love compare distrust, despair and hatred. It is difficult to think of a human character that would be more repellent than one in whom these three habits of mind were combined. A rooted distrust of God, an habitual despair in regard to improving either his surroundings or the faults of his fellowmen, a universal dislike of his fellowmen. St. Paul says, "Now abideth Faith, Hope, Love. These are three constant qualities in the constitution of man made in God's image. On the fulness and completeness of their manifestation in the individual or in the community depends the character of the man or of society. "And the greatest of these is love."

SECTION III—ON THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE DOUBLE LIFE

DAVID encouraged (or strengthened) himself in the Lord his God. It is on the thought that these words express, and that is also the thought of my text, that I would dwell this morning, the thought of a person encouraging himself, his heart taking courage in the Lord.

It is strange how often we speak of ourselves as if everyone of us was two persons. I said to myself, we say, I reasoned with myself, I frightened myself, I encouraged myself. We also say of a man that he deceives himself, or that he persuades himself, or that he does not know himself. This relation of a man to himself is one of the great facts of our human nature, and it is one of the great facts of religion. We live each one of us a sort of fellowship life with ourselves, into the deepest recesses of which no one else save God may or can enter.

Not e'en the tenderest heart and next our own
Knows half the reasons why we smile or sigh.
Each in his hidden sphere of joy or woe
Our hermit spirits dwell and range apart.
Our eyes see all around, in gloom or glow,
Hues of their own, fresh borrowed from the heart.

Now this sort of quality or double personality in each one of us confronts us sometimes in one way, sometimes in another. It may be a source of weakness

as in a double-minded man unstable in all his ways, or of inward distraction and restlessness as in a half-hearted man, or it may be a tremendous strength to us and a huge addition to our confidence and usefulness, to the effectiveness of our lives. "With my whole heart have I sought Thee." This duality is most easily recognized in the picture of Roman vii., a man at cross purposes with himself, in a perpetual state of inner conflict. The better half approved the right, the more vigorous and overbearing carrying the day, doing wrong.

President Garfield said, "There is one man in the world whose approval I must have at all costs, *e.g.*, J. Garfield, for I can't get away from him; and to eat and drink and sleep and live with a man who does not approve of one is intolerable."

But the picture of double personality in Roman vii. is one of man fallen from his high estate (Gen. i. 26). The end of the conflict must be a victory, either for Satan, defying God and all moral right, or a victory for Christ and absolute unity in Christ. "I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me."

The twofold personality was not meant to be a conflicting nature, but a partnership in the nobler life. It was evidently meant to perform the same function in a man's spiritual life as different senses perform in the body. The eye may assist the ear, the ear may assist the eye; each helping a man to decide on the nature of the circumstances with which he has to deal. So reason may assist faith and faith assist reason. So love may brace up the will, encourage it, embolden it, and the will may put energy into love, saving it from being a merely barren emotion. Experience of God's power in the past may come to the help of hope, and hope may show the way in present difficulty, and lead to a deeper experience. We all know what strength on the one hand and what weakness on the other comes to us from outside, through the personality of other people, *e.g.*, Here is

a thing that you feel pretty sure is either not a right thing to do or not a wise thing to do, but someone is urging you to do it, and yet you feel you cannot say exactly why you ought not to. And then you meet a friend in whose judgment and general wisdom above all, in whose goodness you have confidence, and you talk the matter over with him, and he not only agrees with you but he gives you good reason why he would not do it, and makes you feel that Christ would not do it, and so he encourages and strengthens you to decline to do it.

Now the teaching of the Bible is, and may we not say the deepest experience of each one of us is, that God has linked us together as it were in a nature of which one part answers to, or supplements, the other. We are not all faith, nor all love, nor all hope. Neither are we all reason, all experience, or all action. We have our moods, we have our difficulties in the outside world from the affinity of something within us. But each is conscious of a higher self, and that is virtually the Divine nature working in us, and its function is to bring us to a unity of all our powers. This has been the experience of the noblest men in all ages. It finds expression in the Psalms.

I know of no strengthening in hours of temptation, perplexity or sorrow like this inner communion of man with the voice of God within. No one from without can always say just the right thing at the right time. But as we withdraw into the sanctuary of the enlightened soul we receive the help we need.

How shall we attain to it? Only by effort, the effort of faith, the effort of taking our lives to the standard of Christ for measurement, the effort of casting ourselves on God's help, believing that He that spared not His own Son will with Him freely give us all things.

Look at the experiences of God's people, in the Bible, in biography.

Think of what we have received from those who

went before and of what we can hand on to those who come after.

The ground of hope towards God is the same in the case of the vilest sinner and of the holiest saint, viz., what God is in Himself. Sin makes confidence in God impossible in the same way as blindness makes sight impossible, not by destroying the reality of the object to be seen, or by changing its character, but by depriving the blind man of the power of seeing it. The punishment of sin by God is no ground for shaking the sinner's confidence in God. People speak sometimes of God as being just as well as loving, implying that there is a point beyond which God cannot allow His love to carry Him, lest it should interfere with His justice; not perceiving that in so thinking of God they are limiting the Holy One of Israel, introducing an element of conflict and division into their conception of God.

Following the Lamb.

Often in the hour of prayer and meditation on the Word of God, or in midnight hour, when God visits us, we are made to see visions of life and its possibilities, of our failures and their sinfulness, which we know to be of God. But the visions pass away, if not constantly kept in mind by an effort of the will and by an offering of them up to God brought out of the region of dreamland into that of action. Visions of God, of heaven opened, of life's work and motives and relationships all uplifted, are fraught with infinite danger as well as with immeasurable blessing. We must on our knees appropriate them, and rising from our knees we must at once begin to live them in the strength by the grace of Him from Whom they came, especially welcoming them on that side on which they demand earnest, conscientious, self-denying effort, the mortification of the flesh and of the mind.

I was walking yesterday among the shanties and hovels on the low-lying, ill-drained ground at the back

of the Concession. A sense of great depression came over me at the vision here presented of poverty, dirt, disease and ignorance. And then I could not but think of the moral waste that must lie beneath that so unattractive, so repellent exterior. Here were people many of them no doubt living by cheating, lying and catering to evil-doing. "And the word of the Lord came for me and questioned me, yet demanding no instant answer." Think of all the disease, loathsome disease that must exist here, the physical suffering of the world. Who is able to go among it without any manifestation of disgust and quietly to wash the wounds and tend the cases of loathsome sores and so on? Who is able to go into all the dens of vice of the world, the human hells that the sin of man has created and maintains, and that are as common among the prosperous and well-fed as among the poor, and those who have neither sufficiency of bread nor of clothing? Who is able to regard the world's monsters of vice without loathing and horror, and to go and deal with them in the spirit of salvation? Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. To what depths did He, the sinless one, stoop, and from what heights? Does His Church expect to succeed by cheaper, less sacrificing methods, only thanking God that Christians are not as other men? What does the Lord mean when He says, 'Where I am there shall also My servant be'? What does He mean but this, that in the crucified but risen life of Jesus, the Christ, the Son of God, the Son of Man, the members of His Body shall be enabled to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth? Save us, Lord, save me, from the unrealities of a faith admired, praised, professed; but found wanting on the battlefield of Christ against Satan.

The Wilderness.

There is a peculiar suitability about the wilderness for being the scene of the Lord's temptation. It is

often in times of solitude that we are most fiercely assaulted by Satan. But on the other hand, it is often in the crowd that we seem to have least power of resistance. Other voices beside the voice of God are then too easily heard expressing opinions on the matter in hand—sometimes helping on the wrong side, sometimes offering counsels for resistance which fall far short of the highest counsels. Have I received a real or imaginary affront? In the crowd I shall find opportunities of repeating it and so intensifying my sense of grievance. Well-meaning friends will sympathize in a way that will only feed the flame of resentment. In the wilderness I shall more easily realize the one Presence that will calm me and bring me to my knees, and shall also realize that temptations are to be met by the Word of God and not by human plans and devices.

The Communion of Saints.

If we were only more accustomed to think of the Holy Spirit as dwelling within us and to trust His indwelling presence in others, how much more easy and natural religious fellowship would be. We think more of personal idiosyncrasy and other things than of Him. We distrust ourselves and we distrust others, and the result is a sense of loneliness and a perpetual narrowness of vision. Think of the Holy Spirit in one believer prompting to intercourse and sympathetic intercourse with another believer in whom He also is working. What answering of heart to heart! What enlarging of outlook! What deepening and enriching of each life must result! How we wrong Him, how we wrong one another, by perpetually meeting to talk only of trifles, only on the surface!

The practical lesson to myself is the duty of doing more to strengthen Church fellowship and direct religious intercourse with others. There is an awful danger in stopping short with visions and not seeing

that the Cross is the way of life—the penalty and crown of the way of Christ. We can only strengthen the faith and build up the Church by personal surrender. Shallow intercourse of friendship costs nothing and brings only shallow joy. “That they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.”

Conflicting Duties.

I owe it to God and to Christ not to be continually realizing the clamorous calls of a score of conflicting duties. It is surely one of the ways in which by waiting upon God that our strength is renewed that he puts heart into us. Friends on earth have often said to me, “You are doing too much.” “Don’t do it to-day, you are tired and have other things to do. Never mind.” And I have spoken similarly to others. Has it ever occurred to me that *Christ* might thus speak to me sometimes and I not recognize His voice or give Him credit for a like tender regard for His servants? O Lord Jesus, help me to trust Thy tenderness to me more. Make me more tender and less exacting in my demands both on others and on myself.

A multiplicity of duties should awaken in us a thankful recognition of the fact that our God has judged us to be both worthy and competent to attend to them all. It is poor gratitude for having five talents entrusted to us to wish them fewer and to chafe under our stewardship.

When circumstances of any kind come in to hinder one’s working the work of God on the lines that most approve themselves to one’s judgment, or when the action of other people hampers and restricts us in the development of one’s plans, we should just accept it all quietly as from God and go on and do the thing He would have us do on the next best lines that are possible under the circumstances. Fretting and chafing are both sinful and useless, and involve the

waste of much precious time, inward feeling and force.

Motives.

It often happens that the highest and most powerful motives for right action seem for a time to be feeble and unable to move men in comparison with motives that are intrinsically lower and that appeal more directly to the carnal imagination. Fear of consequences restrains many men from crime, who are not moved by the attraction of love or by aspiration after holiness. The praise of men and the desire for a reputation for generosity draws forth many contributions for religious or philanthropic work, which our Lord's most true declaration that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" would not have elicited. A desire for personal safety moves many to ask "what must I do to be saved?"—to whom St. Paul's passionate words, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death" are almost unintelligible. Once again, the thought of evangelizing the world for the world's sake and for the good of the individuals that the world contains, is a motive for missionary enterprise much more widely understood and appreciated than the motive afforded by the thought of fulfilling the Will of God or of manifesting to the nations the glory of God, and through a redeemed and sanctified Church making known to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places the manifold wisdom of God. And yet directly the higher motive is discerned by any and accepted and welcomed into the life, its power is felt in a way and to an extent that the power of the lower motive never could be felt, indeed it is not too much to say that in some cases the remembrance of the lower motive becomes almost offensive. To men who have seen the vision of God the terrors of a Buddhist hell seems only to awaken a sense of immeasurable disgust and resentment at such a travesty of the unseen, and

the thought of using mere terror to awaken repentance becomes impossible. To those who have realized the blessedness of giving, the thought of parading their names in subscription lists is utterly distasteful and impossible. It is equally impossible for them to incite others to generosity by promising them, or helping them to gain, notoriety as their reward.

Time for Work.

“On Thee do I wait all the day.” All the day’s doings may thus be sanctified. We often say we have no time to get through all our work. It is not true. We have time for every work that God gives us to do. The work that we have not time for is work that has not been committed to us. How needful it is to be thoughtful and considerate in work—to have a plan in which we can rest peacefully as being from God. We live too much by jerks—the jerks of self-will and passing impulse. If in the morning hour we can hear and put on record the Master’s plan for us, it will make it much easier for us all day to wait on Him as step by step we fulfil our appointed tasks. Interruptions will come, but these can be satisfactorily dealt with if we are already fully possessed by a deep conviction of the importance of the plan already set before us. Some interruptions we shall accept as throwing fresh light on the path of duty; others we shall at once dispose of as being irrelevant and incompatible with waiting on God in a predetermined path and line of conduct.

There are some things we cannot do because God has not given us the power or ability necessary therefore. Others we cannot do through spiritual failure—neglect of past grace proffered to us and of providing oil for our lamps. God help us to live—day by day, hour by hour, to be alive unto God, awake.

Pluck up heart! Thou hast thy witness to bear, and be not downcast if it is not popular and if people

look askance at thee and think thy work a failure. God has given thee a deep distrust of popular standards of success, he has given thee to distrust mere knowledge of religious formulæ. He has given thee to trust in the cross and in its eternal witness to the path of true discipleship, to believe in life and character as truer indications of sympathy with the Gospel, than facility in repeating catechisms ; in love and pity for the poor, as the first-fruits of a life born again. He has given thee to see a holy Church, knowing the Scriptures, not a baptized crowd of ignorant people—as that for which we should work and aim. Elect saints, not a baptized world, the nucleus of the Kingdom ! *Sursum Corda !*

On an Anniversary.

My God, on this anniversary—most sacred, most solemn to me—I come before Thee to worship, to praise, to adore. By the Grace of God I have been called to and kept in my stewardship and allowed for twenty-two years to be a missionary of Christ to the heathen. Were I now to begin my confession of sins of unfaithfulness I should hardly know how to stop. . . . But I will now recall the goodness of the Lord in the past, His present faithfulness, His will concerning me. I thank Thee, Lord, for the chain of events and circumstances—as we speak—by which I was led to desire the office of the missionary. My parentage, the early influences of home, the early influence of the Holy Ghost, especially at Leatherhead, then at Millhill, then at Christchurch, and for my appointment to China. I expressed a wish for India or Japan,—thus early in my career setting forward taste and fancy and inclination, as if they should have some weight in settling the sphere of my ministry for Jesus the Crucified ! Lord, forgive ! But Thou in Thy love overruledst my foolish and hastily expressed preferences and didst send me to China, and

gavest me John and Hill to be the friends of my early life in China. God, I dare hardly think of all the past with its self-will, self-pleasing in subtle ways ; its irresoluteness, its instability, its neglect of all sorts of opportunities. My soul adores the patience and forbearance of God through it all. Thou art God and not man. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. He is our peace, or hope.

Joy.

best "I delight to do Thy Will, O my God." Behold the secret of Joy ! How can we rejoice unceasingly ? By unceasingly recognizing and fulfilling the will of God. What fountains of joy then are accessible to us every day—what endless treasures of delight ! A hundred duties it may be or perhaps only one, but in each a will of God, or rather *the* will of God, and, therefore, a well-spring of joy. O the sin of dull, joyless acceptance of a lot known as the appointment of the Father for us,—make sure of that. Is it God's appointment ? Is it God's will ? Don't commit yourself till you know, and then—Away with our fears—Away with our tastes ! Away with gloomy thoughts ! Rejoice in the Lord, and rejoice not least in this that He has chosen for thee. He Who knows all, sees all, understands all, He has chosen something that thou in thy poor, creeping ignorance wouldest not have chosen, wouldest not have seen, wouldest not have understood.

Joy is not only permissible to, but obligatory on, the Christian. Compare Gal. v. 22. Joy is such a duty as love, long-suffering, gentleness, etc., and joyousness is to be made a matter of conscience and a subject for constant prayer and entreaty. Of course there are reasons for not being joyous, as there are reasons for not being loving, gentle, etc. But these reasons are not valid, these inclinations are to be resisted. Surrounded as we are by causes for joy, joyousness ought to be easy, but duty has nothing to

do with the ease or difficulty with which a thing may be done. What is the ground of our rejoicing? Circumstances, or the Lord? Circumstances are the surface of life. Faith in God is its substance. Storms stir the surface of all water, but not its depths. Water that is all stirred by storms is shallow.

“Thou hast loved righteousness and hated wickedness, therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.” He who loves righteousness and hates iniquity ought to have joy and gladness as the predominant characteristic of his life, and he will have it in proportion to his faith in God and his vision of God. It is God’s gift to him, the earnest of what shall be hereafter when Christ has put all enemies under his feet.

Impressed to-day with the thought that thankfulness and the expression of thankfulness is as much due for mercies renewed as for mercies experienced for the first time, but how little I give thanks for the daily recurring use of my senses! If we had been so constituted that we only saw the light periodically, say for one day in a month, while we were in darkness for the remainder of the period, how we should rejoice in this monthly day of light!—but because the mercy is multiplied thirty-fold, we often forget to give thanks to the Lord for His abundant mercy and goodness.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

DETACHED THOUGHTS ON THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

“BLESSED are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” Whence comes all the mourning and sorrow of my life? Not in outward circumstances, for God has dealt most graciously with me. I mourn the feebleness, weakness, waywardness of my character; my earthly-mindedness, my lack of apprehension of the presence of God; the facility with which conversation and thought turn to trifles; my disregard of the value of souls, my procrastination, etc., etc., etc. For these things I mourn night and day. What if being thus I did not mourn? Here is a first ground of consolation. The vision of something higher, the utter disgust at my soul for cleaving to the dust and being so unmindful of Jesus my Lord and so unlike Him, is an evidence that He is with me. “I will see you again and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no one taketh from you.” But a further ground of consolation is in the assurance of my part in Christ, and He Himself is the propitiation for our sin. He Himself is the resurrection and the life. “Himself hath said I will in no wise fail thee, neither will I in any wise forsake thee.”

PEOPLE say sometimes in regard to the missionary question, “I find that I cannot feel any missionary enthusiasm. I cannot realize the condition of the heathen as being of such extreme peril or in itself a condition so extremely deplorable. I am sorry it

is so, but so it is. Others have the enthusiasm, I have not. Others feel deeply and are, therefore, able either to be missionaries, or, at all events, to take a lively interest in Missions." *Will* is stronger than *feeling* as a mainspring of persistent and constant action. Take Christ's command, accept Christ's estimate of the man without God and act. Identify yourself with the missionary cause as an act of loyalty to Christ, and you may bring to His work an offering of a consecrated will which will be of priceless value, not only in His sight, but in its influence on men. Some emotional people who were utterly unsuitable for missionaries, but who *would* go in spite of entreaties, from friends who did go, and who collapsed at the first difficulty, might perhaps have been restrained by friends in whom the missionary consecration was strong, when their judgment, cool, clear, but sympathetic, was expressed.

DESIRE, promise (vow), will, are three stages of mind exhibited in the service of God. Scripture and human history are full of examples of each. In some cases there is a steady orderly progress from the child's simple desire after God and delight in His ways to the young man's promise and vow, "O Jesus I have promised to serve Thee to the end," and so forward to the submissive and indomitable will, strong, unquestioning, victorious, triumphant over all mere moods and inclinations and everything else. God working in us, both to will and to do of His good pleasure. But alas, in how many cases desire, delight, either pass away like an unrestrained stream, or turn into self-deceptive thought of repeated promises, in both falling short of a truly fixed heart, an overcoming character.

PICTURE to yourself what would be the ideal world for you, the ideal circumstances for one of your natural temperament and special gifts and weaknesses to be

placed in, the ideal of work, the ideal of friendship, the ideal of everything for showing you off at your best and making all your life most truly conducive to the glory of God, the salvation and sanctification of your own soul and to your usefulness to your age and generation. Draw the picture with care. Give scope to your imagination. Put on your wishing cap, write down the result, and you will find it all anticipated by the forethought and foreknowledge and wisdom that has placed you exactly where you are and has chosen your inheritance for you !

IMPRESSED to-day with the disgrace to the Christian of tolerating in himself faults such as of unpunctuality and dilatoriness, by which everybody else is inconvenienced. May God show me the sinfulness of these sins which we in our blindness regard as unimportant.

WOULD not the spirit of Christianity teach us this to be the rule of Christian life—never to allow anyone to perform a menial act of service for us, which we are not willing to perform ourselves ? On this principle no service can be regarded as really menial.

IN all things let the standard of Christ be your standard, the joy of Christ your joy, the satisfaction of Christ your satisfaction, the sorrow of Christ your sorrow, the dissatisfaction of Christ your dissatisfaction. Things that are not right or that are unsatisfactory disturb us sometimes with a disturbance that has in it elements of private and personal feeling. They annoy, they vex, they irritate. The standard to bring both them and ourselves to is the standard of Christ. If they are wrong or poor or misguided or fallacious and deceptive or mischievous in tendency, *Christ* is concerned about them. He grieves over them. He would have them changed. He feels intensely about them. He is opposed to them, but all in the spirit of salvation. He is not vexed, despairing

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or irritated. His feeling is too profound, too full of concern for the removing of the hindrance to God's glory which they cause.

WE desire immediate perfection—to be set free from the pain of failure and self-reproach, and yet perhaps it is in this very thing, by a slower, more trying, more humbling, more disappointing method than we have ever thought of, asked for, or even been willing to assent to, God will do exceedingly abundantly for us according to the power that worketh in us, even the power that He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.

UNPREPAREDNESS, unpunctuality, unreadiness in little things are but the symptoms of a deep-rooted malady of the soul which we only rightly estimate in the light of the day of His appearing.

1876.—I am too apt to see a stern, inexorable law of perfection and to disregard the existence of pardoning love and renewing grace.

1913.—But in later years that same thought of a stern, inexorable law of perfection has become to me a part of my faith and hope. "I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." God's forgiveness and grace holds out to us no encouragement to hope that God will compromise His righteous demands on us, or accept finally from us anything but His own will concerning us. Of our Lord Jesus it is said, "Wherefore He is able to save unto the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him."

"WHILE we have opportunity let us do good unto all men." It is very important to make use of all our impulses to do good. The full power of these impulses is often felt only temporarily, but so long as they last doing good is easy and pleasant. Are not these

impulses God-sent opportunities to be made use of ere they pass away ?

WE ought also to be content and willing to do at any moment just that kind of good for which we are at the time capable. We may not always feel equal to imparting the highest kind of consolation, but that is no reason why we should not give anything. A mere kind enquiry after a sick man's health, a present of flowers or some trifling act of kindness is not without its value, its religious value.

THE one act of faith by which one grasps a promise of God whereby the past is obliterated seems easier than the lifelong attitude of faith by which one receives, day by day, hour by hour, the sanctifying, uplifting, upholding grace of Christ, needful for life and conduct and speed and thought, which shall be always well-pleasing to God. But inasmuch as both righteousness and sanctification are a part of the Wisdom from God which has been provided for us and bestowed upon us in Christ, one must not doubt but believe. It is not God's will that I, or any man, should be half-saved, "saved so as by fire," but saved "unto the uttermost," to the glory of His adorable Son.

IMPRESSED with the thought of the supreme importance of making *His* will, *His* glory, the centre of all effort and desire. Not my sanctification, not the welfare or salvation of men, but the glory of God in these things. O to judge of every personal question impersonally with a view to this, that God in all things may be glorified, my personal likings to be counted for nothing !

THE Christian's face should be always radiant with the reflection of the glory of His Master's face. There is a glory of joy, a glory of peace, a glory of love and tenderness, a glory of wonder, a glory of eagerness,

a glory of strength—an awful glory perhaps of indignation—but there is no glory of gloom, or sullenness, or of looking miserable.

It is very common to find Christians who recognize their dependence upon God in *great* things and who would never decide any great matter without prayer, manifesting a good deal of self-reliance in regard to *little* things—committing themselves to opinions or to courses of action without ever really seeking the Divine guidance. It is very undesirable to be always talking about prayer in connexion with trifles ; such talk often creates an impression of sanctimoniousness and unreality. The highest hopes and actions of the life of faith are often best felt to manifest themselves in silence. But the ideal of the Christian life is certainly this—that we should naturally, spontaneously and habitually carry every question we have to decide to God. This is not to abdicate our judgment or to disregard the faculties which God has entrusted to us wherewith to come to decisions on practical questions of life. It is the sanctification of judgment. No one is in favour of a man acting thoughtlessly, why should we ever act prayerlessly ? For the Christian deliberation should be synonymous with taking counsel of God. When we say I will make up my mind, we ought to mean I will endeavour to find out the mind of Christ and to frame my action by that. We want to get rid of this wretched independence—independence of judgment, thought, action ; and to feel that it is our privilege as the children of God to know the Father's will in everything and to embody that in utterance and in life. |

WE do not manifest reverence and devotion half so much by speaking as by listening. To hear with meekness and to obey with cheerful alacrity is a greater proof of a right attitude of soul towards God than praying volubly is. If some of the time devoted to

prayer meetings were devoted to more earnest study of Scripture, and more painstaking efforts to ascertain the mind of God in regard to all things that He wills we should know, we should see, I think, a far higher type of Christianity prevailing amongst us, and many who are now very feeble members of the body of Christ would develop a new intelligence and a far more manly and helpful character.

I SHALL never be strong morally and religiously until I adopt systematically the method which conscience approves independently of momentary inclination or disinclination, *e.g.*, (1.) Regularity in morning, evening and *midday* devotions. (2.) Systematic study of Scripture. (3.) The attempt to cultivate religious conversation. (4.) Deliberate and habitual self-examination. "All backsliding in religion begins in private, the neglect of individual piety and personal godliness, it ends where ?" (Norman McLeod's life.)

THE Christian in his work on earth is like a diver working at the bottom of the sea. He is not in his native element and cannot live permanently there. Often he looks to be living altogether on the land, but his time has not yet come. In the meantime he must often ascend for meals and at all times he must be supplied from above with air.

WATCHING unto prayer is an indispensable condition of attaining to the quiet, peaceful and successful conquest of acknowledged faults, failures and weaknesses, and of replacing weakness with strength. How then shall we, amid the whirl of circumstances and surprises and unlooked for or unrealized temptations, stand fast and quietly and persistently maintain the sense of the Divine presence and the true ideal of action that has been kindled within us in hours of spiritual insight? Only surely by deliberately cultivating with spiritual effort a sense of our relation

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to Jesus Christ. "No one cometh to the Father but by Me." "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." "Able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by Him."

THE mercies of God make it possible for us to present our bodies, the complete personality as it exists at any stage of our history, a living sacrifice—the true fulfilment of the idea of a sacrificial offering, and it is to be fashioned by an inward principle of renewal of life for our proving and testing the Will of God, which we have to make our own. For this surrendered life possibilities of grace and of gracious ministries to be wrought out through us are available and are entrusted to us. Our gifts are various, and we may neither under value those entrusted to others nor depreciate our own. We have simply to exercise our own, to concentrate our energies on making them spiritually effective—in love, sincerity, living sympathy, persistency, diligence, spiritual intensity, our eyes ever unto the Lord, in joyousness, hopefulness, steady prayerfulness and liberality.

PEOPLE sometimes find fault with the old monks for their going out of the world, and becoming absorbed only in their own religious welfare. There is another going out of the world which is more ignominious than that. People leave the great world of suffering and poverty and pain to become absorbed in their own affairs, religious or non-religious—not in monasteries with their austere discipline, but dwelling in the luxury and refinement of comfortable homes from which the poor and outcast are excluded.

THERE is a conception of the Church answering to the conception of the Mahommedan God—one, isolated, outside of everything, self-contained, self-satisfied. There is another conception of a Church, whose characteristic is fulness—manifoldness of operation and of vision.

Example
IMPRESSED to-day with the contrast between the example left us by Christian giants and that left us by Christ. The tendency of the former is to dazzle, to call forth admiration, and at times greatly to depress us, by making us feel our moral, intellectual and spiritual inferiority. But the Lord's example is wholly inspiring. Here is the fountain of hope, aspiration and effort. He shames my sloth, my self-centredness, my want of love, but He cheers and encourages and strengthens all that is by His grace true in me. May He ever show me possibilities of service which to Him with the self-imposed limitation, of His incarnation were not possible. Abide in me, O Christ ! and I in Thee.

It was shown to me this morning that I must with much prayer, faith, love, patience and meekness meet the question on the Committee. It is of the highest importance that we should as far as possible be unanimous, and that no friction or irritation should manifest itself in our proceedings. Armed with the breast-plate of faith and love no hasty word from another in discussion and no unloving or inconsiderate impulse from Satan need or can touch my heart. God grant that through all our meetings love, holiness, wisdom and gentleness may prevail, the Holy Spirit leading us into all truth.

note
I WOULD endeavour earnestly to overcome the habit of being in a hurry. Hearing a few days ago of a doctor in large practice who always made his patients feel that he had plenty of time to give them, I felt greatly rebuked. How many Chinese enquirers or converts have ever felt that about me ? The rushing, scampering, driving life, even if it accomplishes more than the quiet, leisurely, peaceful life, creates an impression which neutralizes much of the good which it is intended to accomplish. Give me, O Lord, the rest of faith, calmness, self-possession ; patience as well as vigour, earnestness and intensity.

IN all our private intercourse and in all our dealings with men we should so speak and so act as we would wish to do towards those whose dying bed we may hereafter have to watch beside. What spiritual consolation could we in that solemn hour offer to anyone with whom we had quarrelled, or who had come to distrust our personal character?

MUCH good may at times have been wrought through protests and resignations and withdrawals and the like. They may sometimes be necessary, but they often come perilously near to the spirit of the Pharisee, who however zealous he may have been to guard against evil by separation from it, was almost more concerned to deliver his own soul than the souls of his fellows,—more zealous for consistency and for having his own position plain to all men, than for establishing all his fellow believers and servants in the ways of God.

“CALL no man master.” No teacher has ever fascinated me as Bishop Westcott has done. To him I owe under God, more than to any other writer I know of. He has seen the eternal and invisible and has enabled me to see it. But it is a characteristic of the prophet sometimes to see the far off vision more clearly than the present and than the intermediate. ~~And~~ I feel that one needs continually to correct, so to speak, the prophetic vision of my great teacher by dwelling on truths of which he saw less than some have done—the enormity of sin, the awful guilt of the sinner, the anguish of his punishment, the wrath of God, the full meaning of the Atonement with its transference of regard (here I find more help in Wace, Dale and Mozley than in the great bishop), the existence of a personal antagonist to Christ, and of an active, aggressive kingdom and power of darkness. The place assigned in the New Testament to Satan is wonderfully significant, especially in the opening

scene of our Lord's ministry (Matt. iv. 1-11), in His first two parables, in the Lord's prayer, etc., etc.) Dr. Whyte sometimes seems to me to exaggerate and to speak more from the memory of former vision than under the inspiration of a present one ; but when his eyes are really opened to see as a present vision the awful evil that is in man, and to feel the burden of this alienation of the world from God weighing down his spirit, or to see the sacrifice of the Lamb of God as the one only but all-sufficient sacrifice, satisfaction and oblation for sin in man, he makes me wish that the great bishop had seen this too. The Apocalypse has given me the true and abiding outlook. The awful vision of Christ's majesty as well as of His compassion, the awful issues and conflict of sin as well as the final triumph of the King and of the Kingdom. "We see in part and we prophecy in part." Blessed is the Church that has, and can recognize, prophets whose united testimony—not their individual utterances—illustrates the teaching of the perfect word.

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